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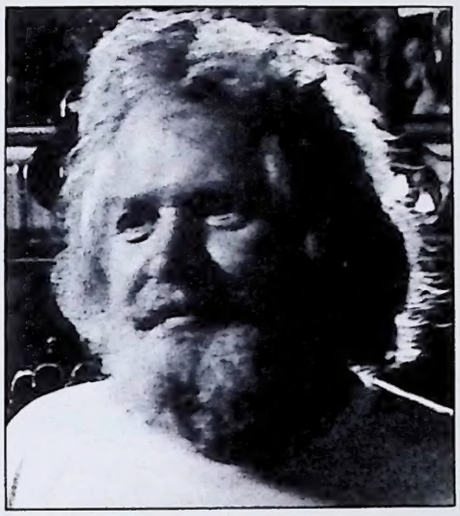

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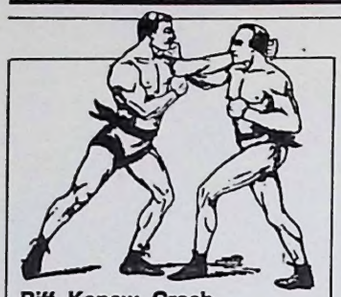
The News Page

The truth 24 times per second.



Biff, Kapow, Crash

Two Florida Technological University researchers have reported, in *Development Psychology*, on an experiment in which nine-year-old children were left alone and shown a videotape (which they had been told was live) of a small girl and boy playing, at first peacefully, then arguing, and finally fighting with increasing ferocity. Half of the onlookers had first been shown a short, violent cowboy film, and that half took significantly longer before they left the room where they were watching the tv screen to fetch the experimenters. Those who had not seen the film tended to go for help while the children were still arguing, before any physical violence had occured. An inescapable conclusion is that while some children may become more violent in everyday life as a result of media violence, even more children may be learning to tolerate it.

An Uglier American

More than 12 years after it was first produced, and 11 years after it was first shown in Bangkok, **The Ugly American** is creating something of a stir in Thailand, according to a report in *The New York Times.*

The film (actually shot in Thailand, but depicting a country based on South Vietnam) bombed at the Thai box office during its first release, partly (it is felt) because Communism was depicted as a real threat to the stability of the mythical country of Sarkhan. Under the Thai military dictatorship of the day, such a possibility was considered patently ridiculous.

But today, Communism has suddenly become a real spectre to many of the people — and the film's air of reality is enhanced by the fact that the actor who portrayed the premier of the mythical country of Sarkhan (then an obscure journalist, Kukrit Pramoj) has since become the real-life Premier of Thailand.

So, when film distributor Wanchai Voravudhi tried to re-release the film, he ran head on into police captain Ranong Umnueysarn who had recently been appointed chief censor (Captain Ranong, who does not speak English, often sees — and bans — films before anyone had added subtitles). When the film was first submitted to the police board (last February), it was banned. The board explained: "This film is closely connected with the methods of Communism, which agitates the public and may prejudice the public against Americans who are coming to help us. It shows many methods used by the Communists to fool the public and create misunderstanding, and could cause the public to rise up."

Mr. Wanchai appealed in August (this time submitting a subtitled version), and the higher review panel passed the film (asking for the removal of only one line — when the premier, at a time of crisis, turns to the U.S. ambassador and says, "Call out the Seventh Fleet right away!") Nonetheless, the film was again banned (prior to its scheduled September opening) by the Minister of the Interior, until it was discovered that the Deputy Premier had planned a benefit for the opening night, and had already sold $10,000 - worth of tickets. The Deputy Premier overruled the Minister of the Interior, and the opening went ahead, as scheduled, September 25th.

The Premier himself managed to stay out of the controversy, though he did admit — at a press conference — that "It is much harder being the real Premier than a movie Premier."

The Motion Picture Association of America paid for a survey. President Jack Valenti reports:

"While young people, especially in the 16-20 age group, continue to make up the largest segment of the audience and groups up to age 29 account for a larger proportion than their numerical size would suggest, there is a significant change from all our previous surveys. Teenage (12-17) admissions are down and adult admissions are up, as compared to 1969-73. Between 1973 and 1975, there was a significant rise in the adult share of admission. People age 18 and over accounted for 81 percent of admissions, compared with 74 percent in 1973."

"Current population trends suggest that a larger number of mature young people are available for theatre attendance than in previous years. They have grown in number and fewer are hampered with family and children."

The average annual number of admissions per adult (18 and up) rose to 12.7 in 1975 from 10.6 in 1973. Frequent filmgoers (attendance at least once a month) account for only 25% of the population (12 and up), but a staggering 86% of admissions.

Harvard scientist Dr. Deborah Langston has received a $25,000 scholarship from director William (**The Exorcist**) Friedkin to continue her research into a drug to treat a venereal infection in women which can cause corneal blindness.

Norman Jewison has turned down a million-dollar offer from some blood-thirsty money-man who wanted to buy the world-wide rights to (honest!) launch a real-life league for the Rollerball sport.

Britain's EMI has cracked the Red Chinese ban on imported films by selling them **Swallows and Amazons, All Creatures Great and Small,** and three vintage Hitchcocks. Word has it that the Chinese may be interested in buying rights to **Murder on the Orient Express.**

The Emergency Committee to Defend Latin American Filmmakers informs us of the imprisonment of two Chilean filmmakers: 25-year-old actress Carmen Bueno and 27-year-old cameraman Jorge Muller. Bueno had lead roles in **A La Sombra del Sol** and **The Promised Land;** Muller was cameraman on **The Promised Land, The First Year** and the Saul Landau films **Brazil: A Report on Torture** and **Que Hacer.** The two were "arrested" while working on a documentary film for the Peace Committee of the Chilean Churches and reports state that both have been subjected to beatings and torture while in prison. For further information and suggestions as to what you could do that might help, contact The Emergency Committee to De-

Columbia Pictures Industries, Inc.
Let us Entertain you

Farewell to a Lady

Explaining that, "graphically, she is rather unwieldy", Columbia Pictures Industries, Inc. has announced that a new corporate logo will gradually replace the old "Columbia Lady" that has heralded the beginning of every one of their feature films since the company was founded more than 50 years ago. December marks the debut of the revised trademark on motion picture and television screens.

fend Latin American Filmmakers, 333 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10014.

New York's Film Forum — an important outlet for independently-made films — writes to let us know that they have moved to the newly-renovated Vandam Theatre (15 Vandam St., NYC 10013; 212-989-2994) in the Soho/West Village area.

You've seen those Kodak ads (not in *Take One*, unfortunately) which feature interviews with such film people as Coppola, Friedkin, John Korty and John Hancock? Now Kodak has collected ten of those little interviews together into a booklet called *On Film*. It's free for the asking from Motion Picture and Audiovisual Markets Division, Eastman Kodak Company, 343 State Street, Rochester, N.Y. 14650. If enough *Take One* readers write for copies, mentioning they saw this little plug, maybe Kodak'll put the ads into our magazine in the future as well.

Montrealer Ted (**Duddy Kravitz**) Kotcheff is directing his first Hollywood film: **Dick and Jane,** a comedy starring Jane Fonda and George Segal. Fonda then is scheduled to move on to an as-yet-untitled film (to be directed by John Schlesinger) about returning Viet Nam veterans. ... F.F. Coppola is working with scientist-author Carl Sagan on a potential tv series (for the 1977 season) about the consequences of the receipt of the first interplanetary radio message. ... Warren Beatty has confirmed reports that he plans to write, direct, produce and star in a film based on the life of left-wing writer John Reed. ... Roger Corman has revealed plans to remake three originally-silent films: **A Fool There Was, The Little Minister,** and (yes folks) **The Birth of a Nation.** ... Robin (**Prologue, Action**) Spry has started casting for **One Man,** a National Film Board production about a tv journalist's dilemma when an investigation of a polluting company forces him to make crucial decisions about sick children, his marriage, his own life, and media manipulation. ...Robert de Niro, who had been announced as the lead in Mike Nichols' **Bogart Slept Here** (script: Neil Simon), isn't in the film any more. Will Richard Dreyfuss take the part?

Ophuls' Justice

As the latest development in an escalating legal battle over Marcel Ophuls' current film project (**Memory of Justice** — about the Nuremberg Trials), a Hamburg magistrate recently agreed to Ophuls' request to cancel the projected world "premierè" (on German television October 31 and November 1) of a mutilated version of the film, cut by an hour and three quarters and re-edited by his British producers against Ophuls' wishes. Despite this most recent victory, though, the fate of the latest work by the man who made **The Sorrow and the Pity** (and the son of Max Ophuls, whose **Lola Montez** was — ironically enough — also re-edited by its producers) still hangs in the balance.

The film's problems began just before last Christmas, when Ophuls screened a four hour, 38 minute version of his film for the London producers, V.P.S. The screening was followed by an angry meeting in the bar of the Ritz Hotel and David Puttnam, of V.P.S., announced that his firm would go ahead (despite it being a violation of their agreement with the director) and prepare its own version of the film for American release. Ophuls was removed from the project, denied access to the film itself and, according to one report, actually had to have a friend hide in the bathroom of the V.P.S. building until after closing to steal him a print. A series of successful screenings of Ophuls' version then followed for the major New York critics, and soon people like Lillian Hellman, Stanley Kubrick and Lindsay Anderson began to rise to the defence of Ophuls' right to complete his own film and have it seen.

Memory of Justice, Ophuls recently told a reporter, is more than a film on the Trial itself. From 80 hours of footage (including 15 hours of archival material on the Trial), the director has made a film that carries its examination of moral and legal principles both forward and outward to such other benchmarks of man's inhumanity to man as Algeria and Vietnam, and also includes footage on Ophuls' wife and his father. It was this very enlargement of the film's area of concern that seems to have initiated his problems with his financial backers. Ophuls, in fact, sees the reasons behind his difficulties as being an attempt — on the part of his German and English co-producers — to mitigate the crimes of the Third Reich (a fashionable thing to do these days) by equating them to what happened more recently in Vietnam. By accusing America, he says, some of the burden of guilt would be lifted from German shoulders — if everyone is guilty, everyone is innocent. Ophuls' film, on the other hand, argues forcefully for the necessity of judgement.

At last word, it began to look as if there might be a happy ending after all to this latest battle by an artist to maintain control over his work. A group of businessmen — in association with Paramount — were said to be ready to buy all rights to the film from its current producers and give Ophuls absolute freedom to finish the film as he wants. In the meantime, the mutilated version has been — at least temporarily — kept out of the view of the public by — ironically enough — German justice

Edward Anderson

LETTERS

Alward attacked

Your magazine is interesting and informative but Jennifer Alward seems to have slipped you a piece of shit ("Memoirs of a Censor", Vol. 4, No. 10, page 14).

... what possible difference does the age of her co-workers or her choice of reading material make to me when my only conflict with her is through the works of art she butchers before allowing me to see them? If Alward wanted to impress someone with her credentials she should have listed some films she was responsible for editing and let us judge her work.

She does mention receiving congratulations and a thank you from Mike Nichols but, of course, says nothing of an earlier letter from him concerning her mutilation of **Bonnie and Clyde.**

Alward says she realizes violence is a necessary part to a lot of stories. She certainly can't see violence as an integral part of the complete aesthetic experience or she wouldn't have butchered **The Wild Bunch** to such extremes. She destroyed the flow, the mood, the tone, even the credibility of Peckinpah's great western classic. Her feeble excuse of not enough time to properly cut the film is not only contradicted by Tom Swafford of CBS (page 17), but simply doesn't hold up in the face of such massive destruction.

Next, we hear her mumbling about "more sex, less violence" being the cheap, two-bit philosophy which guides her work since she doesn't understand how to censor for the more mature viewer's 11:30 PM film. She says these films are such atrocities anyway (since they don't make sense to her) that she enjoys cutting them! Can you imagine this sleazy, low-life broad cutting the films of Bunuel, Fellini, Antonioni, *et al*?...

Since she already stated that she doesn't understand the viewer (Col. 3) and doesn't understand the NAB Code (Col. 4) and doesn't understand the filmmakers or their films (Col. 7), it isn't surprising that she didn't understand that one implication of setting aside a specific time for family entertainment would have been to create a specific time for adult entertainment. But then, so long as this dizzy broad is doing the censoring for both audiences without knowing what the difference is between them (Col. 7), such a program would be of dubious value anyway.

Joe Gray
Titusville, Fla.

> Silly of us not to have included, in our *Films: How and Where to Find Out What You Want to Know* (Vol. 4 No. 9 — copies still available at 75¢ each), our own contributor Michael F. Mayer's *The Film Industries — Practical Business/Legal Problems in Production, Distribution and Exhibition* (Hastings House, NYC, 1973). After all, it's the acknowledged authority in the field.

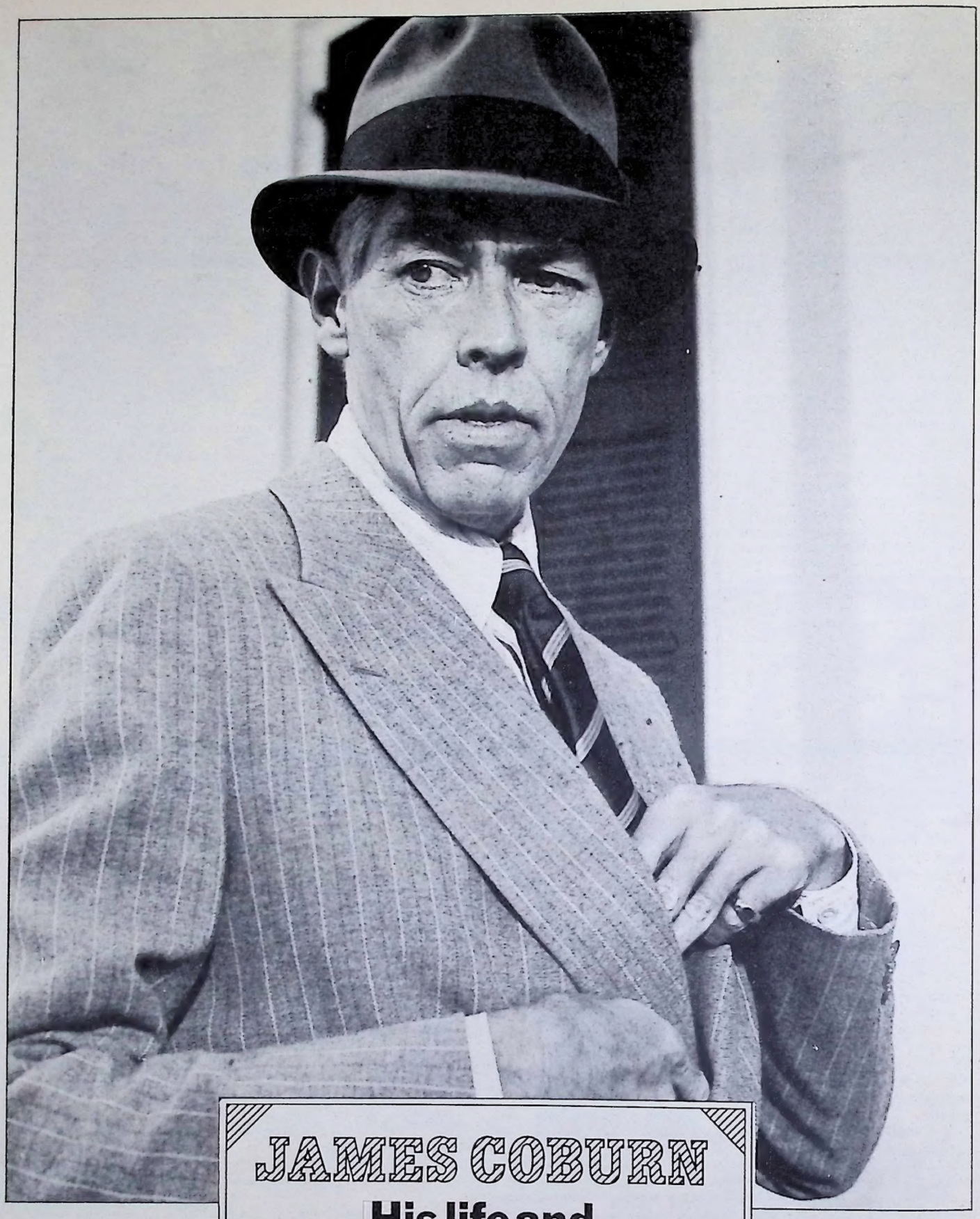
Films By/About Women

We are very appreciative for the publicity you gave our film directory, *Films By and/or About Women* last year; we received a great many inquiries because of it. The only small complaint we have to make is that there was no mention made of the price of the directory ($3 to individual women; $5 to everyone else), so as a consequence many of the inquiries did not contain checks. Could you please find some way of remedying this, and letting people know that we are selling the directory, not giving it away?

You might also mention that the Film collection here has grown to great proportions, since the publication of the directory from it in 1972, and there is no one to organize the new material. We had hoped to publish a second edition from this material, but, in the present state of our finances there is no hope of this unless we receive a grant, or a volunteer, or perhaps some other library or institution takes over the collection.

Elizabeth Snowden
Women's History
Research Center, Inc.
2325 Oak Street
Berkeley, Cal. 94708
415-836-4531

> We welcome letters from our readers but can seldom accommodate lengths of over 500 words. The editors assume that any letter received (unless otherwise stated) is free for publication.



JAMES COBURN

His life and "Hard Times"

As told to Joseph Leydon

Above and opposite: Our Man in ***Hard Times***

"Peckinpah's still trying to find a way of exploring man's violence, that man commits to himself. He hasn't really got that one yet."

James Coburn eases back in his chair and casts a disgusted look at the carrot juice he is sampling. "I really hate this canned stuff," he explains, "but I guess you can't expect them to have a blender to prepare it fresh on location."

Outside the warm cocoon of his trailer, scores of grips, extras and technicians are busily working at creating the period atmosphere for **Hard Times**, an upcoming Columbia release in which Coburn co-stars with Charles Bronson, Jill Ireland and Strother Martin. Set during the Depression Era in New Orleans, **Hard Times** is the story of a taciturn streetfighter (Bronson) and the glib gambler (Coburn) who bankrolls his illegal fisticuffs. Walter Hill, a scriptwriter with such films as **The Getaway** and **Hickey and Boggs** to his credit, is making his debut as a director with this production.

The carrot juice now a lost cause, Coburn unwraps a cigar, cuts off the tip and lights it. One puff and he's flashing that smile that the adjective "wolfish" was invented for. I click on the tape recorder, and business begins.

*You've worked with Sam Peckinpah at two very important stages in his career, in **Major Dundee** and **Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid**. How do you think he's changed over the years? Do you think he's more bitter, more violent, more mellow?*

No, Sam is, I think, a great filmmaker. Of course, he's his own worst enemy. But he's a very unusual man, he's not a normal man. He's not the kind of guy that you'll like or dislike. Sam is an unusual human being, and he needs to be treated like an unusual human being. He can create an atmosphere, whether he's drunk, sober, pissed off or in a rage, or whatever. I mean, for about three or four hours a day, he's a fucking genius. But the rest of the time he spends wallowing in a kind of emotional reaction to either good or bad memories. He drinks, that's nothing new. He goes on the wagon and off the wagon and off the wagon, keeping his constitution really screwed up, but not crystallized. He's not a man who's said, "This is my nation, this is what I'm going to do."

He's still trying to find a way of exploring man's violence, that man commits to himself. He hasn't really got that one yet. He's got the violence like man against man, or man against The System, but he hasn't got man against himself yet, which is the one that Sam's currently working on *with himself*, and has been all his life. I don't know whether he's ever seen that, but he's more violent with himself than he is with anybody else. His films have a violent edge to them because he feels that violence is the one thing that man must overcome in himself in order to become a better human being. And he recognizes that, and knows it better than anybody else, whether he ever states it intellectually or not. He doesn't go around intellectualizing over his films, he says, "I don't know what the fuck they are!" That's the way he says it.

... the adjective "wolfish" ...

Do you think he cares anymore?

Oh, yeah, he cares a great deal. He cares more about film and making films than just about anybody I know.

*As a fan of his, I nevertheless find it very hard to defend **Bring Me the Head of Alfredo Garcia**.*

Yeah, I do too. When we were making **Billy the Kid**, he gave me that script to read, and I told him that I thought it was just a totally unregenerative project. Why should he do it, why should he want to make it, why do it? And the only thing he said to me was, "I don't know, there's something there, something in there, I don't know. I gotta find out what it is." And that's the way he feels about it.

And that's the way I feel about it too. If you can tell a story, or if you can write a story, then you don't have to make a film about it. But if there are all these tentative things that you have to explore, the emotional realities of the situations you are involved in within the context of the film, then you can't write, it has to be done with playing. And that's why actors like Peckinpah so much, because he places them in these situations and takes all their crutches away, and leaves them naked there and allows them to work in a way that keeps the creative flow going all the time. He takes all the clichés away. That's strange to say, because we can be in the middle of a scene, and he'll say, "Say that line again, Jim." And this flood of rage will surge inside you, and you'll say, "What the fuck does he mean, say that line again?" And the cameras are still rolling, so you'll say it again, and just that reaction causes a changing in the thing. It brings it up, or brings a new kind of intensity to it that brings you through the rest of it. And I thought for instance, in **Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid**, I hadn't done that kind of work in really a long, long time, probably the best thing I've ever done. It was all eliminated by the studio.

That's one of the things I wanted to ask you about, the cutting of the film by MGM. Your murder was one of the things that was cut out, was it not?

Yeah, that's the way it opened. It opened with Pat Garrett's death, and it justified the film. Also, there were other very important scenes that were cut. One was a scene with my wife, who was Mexican. Pat Garrett's wife really was a Mexican, and she was trying to make it in a white town, and her husband was the sheriff. Pat Garrett was both a political-minded man and also kind of a hostile rebel, a mean son of a bitch. And he was a politician, the whole killing was a political thing. And he couldn't justify that in himself. That's why he allowed Billy all of the room in the world to get out. He made this big circle around the thing. And the style of the film is very cyclic, like we start from a point, and we're always moving around, moving around, until our fates catch up with us. And we ended up at the scene, Billy's trying to move away, can't move away, and I'm trying to let him get away, and still everything keeps pushing us toward that eventual killing.

Well, the assholes at MGM — then, anyway, people like Jim Aubrey — they're really amateurs. They're television people.

And now they're hotel people.

Yeah, well you see, you can't expect hotel people to know anything, and they hate artists anyway. "Artists" insofar as the film world is concerned, they're the people who make the films. I mean, the grip out here can be an artist, and they are great artists compared to the studio heads. *Most* studio heads. There are some creative people that are running the studios, a few people. But for the most part they're people like Jim Aubrey, who have been put there by a bunch of gangsters to destroy MGM — which they did, in order to make a hotel concern instead of a motion picture producing corporation.

His particular evil nature, I mean the thing that he got his kicks off of, is destroying films that other people made. You can't imagine, you really can't imagine the kind of ability that this cocksucker has! For a man to deliberately destroy a film, for the justification of saying, "The

Joseph P. Leydon is a civil servant in New Orleans, Louisiana who also serves as entertainment editor for The East Orleans News. *He recently won the New Orleans Press Club award for best review of 1974.*

"Sam can come on a set drunk, sit down and shoot a scene brilliantly. This guy would come on a set sober, and not be able to see it."

people are stupid! The people are dumb! They don't want to see that, they won't understand what that is! Just give them the straight down-the-line thing like that! We'll get them in the theatres on the names of the thing!" And what happens is that we all take the blame for it. He doesn't care. He's just going to be there for a few years, and that's all. He's out of there now, thank God. But he's also taken the production company with him. There's no more MGM production company.

You had the same problem there with ***The Carey Treatment****, didn't you?*

Yeah. He almost killed Blake Edwards. Blake Edwards quit the film after he finished shooting, he just couldn't take it anymore. *Physically* could not take it anymore. His back had given out on him in Boston. He shot it in incredible pain for the rest of the film.

We got behind, for instance. When you're shooting on location, you're shooting a special kind of location. And this was in the fall, and we had fog, so we couldn't shoot. So we would go into town, and all of our cover shots were used up by that time. So what we had to do, instead of shooting in the morning, we'd have to wait for the afternoon. And all we needed were three or four more shots of the drive, when I'm taking that little girl on the ride. Well, we were waiting and we were waiting, and we had a couple of real nitwits for producers on that, old buddies of Aubrey. You know, it was like one of those political payoff deals, you hire friends who don't know anything, and they do your bidding. And they pulled the plug on us. Blake says, "What do you mean pulling the plug on us? We'll make up all the time when we get back to the studio." And they said, "You get your ass back here, that's it!"

We all quit three or four times on that film. And then we were promised, "Oh, no, it's okay, come on back." Well we got back, and we picked up sixteen days, and they cut two weeks out of the film. They cut *two weeks* off the end of the schedule, because we picked up all this time. They just cut off two weeks. And all of the whole ending! We had a great design for the whole ending, but they didn't know a goddamn thing about it! We were really going to build that thing, so it had some kind of marvelous — boom, boom, boom — real impact. And we shot the whole thing in one afternoon, with a hand-held camera. So consequently, the film suffered really badly, and we suffer because of that. You see, if you have people who are interested in making film more, you go in and you sit down and you say, "What if you do this? What if you do that? What if you do the other thing?" But to have someone like Aubrey, who's just an arbitrary, evil man, who cuts it out either because it's too good, or because it's some particular personal quirk that he didn't want in there... I never saw the film.

Edwards tried to get his name removed from it, didn't he?

Yes. We all did. But we couldn't do that, we're all committed to it when we sign the contract, it doesn't matter.

Another film of yours that didn't prove very successful financially was ***Hard Contract****, although I can see why. I found it very cerebral, almost like you were doing the darker side of the Flint image.*

Well, I was really unhappy with that film, because the fellow that directed it [S. Lee Pogostin] was also the writer. Now he's a brilliant writer, but he was a terrible director. And he did so many things that were wrong, just out of pure ego, that drove us all up the wall. I mean, he had everything going for him on a silver platter. Jesus! He had the best cameraman that was available, he had a marvelous cast. He picked the cast, he had $7 million. We shot all over Europe, in Morocco, Belgium and Spain, and back in the United States. The trip itself was great, but he turned out to be one of the great egos of all time. And he lost control completely, and he lost respect. Everyone lost respect for him, and it was just because of his own self-destruction. He didn't have enough character.

See, Sam can come on a set drunk, sit down and shoot a scene brilliantly. This guy would come on a set sober, and not be able to see it, couldn't see the scene... We all had to take over for him, it got to the point where he couldn't handle it...

Hard Contract had a great potential that wasn't realized for many reasons, but if there needs to be a blame put on it, it would have to do with Lee's inability to direct his own film. He was trying to do what many writers do. When they're writing a film, a screenplay, they get an image and they try to force that image on the screen. Well, by the time they've written it, by the time they've cast it, a whole process has taken place, so by the time you shoot it, new images have to be created, because you're not sitting in your room alone working out these things. And he was trying to shoot what was in his head instead of what was there. And he couldn't take it off the page and put it on the screen. He should've published it as a book, and allowed some screenwriter to write it and put it into a form, and then we could've made a film out of it — with another director.

Changing the subject, now, how did you get to be friends with Bruce Lee?

I'd been interested in martial arts ever since I did the Flint things, And I learned a little that whetted my appetite. So, I was at a party, and Stirling Silliphant asked me, "Are you interested in martial arts?" And I said, "Sure." "Well, I met a man, his name is Bruce Lee, and he is sensational. I'll give you his number, because he teaches privately, and if you're interested he'll come on over." So I called Bruce up or he called me up, and I said, "Yeah, come on over, we'll see what's happening." And here came this little Chinese guy...

So we started talking, and I asked him, "Well, can you show me what it is that you do?" And I was feeling pretty cocky, because I could do all that stuff. So he said, "I have a one-inch blow that can knock you across the room." And I said, "Come *on*, man!" And he put this pillow up, and — boom! — sure enough, he knocked me back into a chair, and I rolled all the way across the room. One inch! I said, "Let's go to work, man!"

So we worked three years together. His technique has nothing to do with form, his form is no form. He gives you the tools, like, "Here's a hammer, here's a chisel, now build yourself a house." What we worked on is the ability to use these tools — side kick, front kick, left blow, left jab, right jab. And then you've got to put power behind the thing. The transference of energy is where his technique is so unusual. And it's an inner game that you play with your opponent. In other words, it's not somebody trying to overcome somebody else. You're always trying to overcome yourself, your own inadequacies. Bridging the gap, as he used to call it, the area between you and your opponent. And you have to be there when you think you're there. In other words, you don't think, "I'm going to do this," or, "I'm going to do that." It's just whoom! And it's done! Your mind is free. It all becomes automatic, instinctive, intuitive response to yourself. There's no defensive move, like in karate. His defensive move is moving away in order to attack.

And he's the only artist, martial artist, that I know of. All the rest are fighters, or they're sportsmen, or they know a technique of some kind, but as an artist, *he* was an artist. Everything that he did, every movement, every breath that he took during his life was devoted to his art. He related everything to his art. And he inspired everybody who came around him with that kind of enthusiasm. I really miss him. We were very close.

Finally, what got you interested in ***Hard Times****?*

The script. It's an interesting script, and I haven't done a character like this in a long time. It's a good character. And look at the people we have — Charlie, Jill, Maggie Blye, Strother Martin. It's good to work with all of them. And anytime you find an actor who gives, it's good to work with him, I mean, a lot of actors *give*, but they don't have that *thing*.

END

Grant & Hepburn in ***Bringing Up Baby***

In many of Hawks's films there exists a relationship between two people that is either threatened or destroyed by the intrusion of a third party.

Howard Hawks is an extremely good motion picture director. By this time, that much is taken for granted. Over the past decade or so the auteurists, the revisionists and the historians have examined in great detail the many distinctive qualities to be found in the work of this veteran filmmaker, and it appears as if even more voices on the subject are forthcoming. For good or ill, the career of Howard Hawks has undergone close — and for the most part appreciative — review, and one will not find here many a discouraging word. The movies of Howard Hawks have provided me with more pleasure than those of all but a very few directors; this in spite of the fact that his comedies often tend to be shrill and his action films frequently teeter on the brink of melodramatic implausibility. What I respond to in Hawks is his thoughtful treatment of one-to-one relationships (between lovers and friends), his flair with actors and dialogue, and his thoroughly contained, consistent point of view, all virtues that began to flourish in his films of the 1930s, a handful of which are the focus of this subjective analysis.

By Mitchell Cohen

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Between the years 1930 and 1939, Hawks directed a dozen films and partially contributed to three others, making the decade by far the most prolific of his forty-five years as an active filmmaker. The first flush of the sound era was kind to Hawks, and vice versa. Those of his silent films that are available for screening are certainly of historical importance, but are rather static compared to his talking pictures. **Fig Leaves**, for example, is a contrived situation comedy in the *I Love Lucy* manner about a woman who, against her husband's wishes, takes a modeling job so that she might have nice clothes to wear. The complications are predictable, the characters are clichéd and the whole film is an only mildly amusing work. Other films such as **Paid to Love** and **A Girl in Every Port** do provide intimations of later themes, but are less than totally satisfying. Hawks did not become visually expressive until the screen was verbally liberated, and then his films began to crackle.

Open/Closed Circles

When Peter Bogdanovich, in an interview, remarked to Hawks that a number of his films end as they begin, Hawks replied, "It's a form of story telling that I think is very fine." That is an over-simplification, of course, but it does indicate Hawks's concern with the mechanics of narrative form. When he opens a film at a certain point, and concludes with a return to that place, or a variation on the event, it suggests both a calculated linearity — the films have a beginning, middle and end — and a time/space continuum — the ending is but a new beginning for a film

ALL PHOTOS: CINEMABILIA

A feeling that there are two species of human on the planet, and it's them against us, permeates Hawks's work.

which he has chosen not to make. In this way, many Hawks films are like spirals, circles that are simultaneously open and closed, one coming on top of the other. Much has been made of the fact that Hawks has never used a flashback (although **Fig Leaves** does contain framing sequences in Eden), but as his films head consistently toward a point in the future they also, by the means of repeated dialogue, locations and shot compositions, recognize that the influence of the past is inevitable. This tendency is found, strangely, almost exclusively in his films of the 1930s.

Near the start of **The Road to Glory** (1936), Warner Baxter — as a captain in the French army during WWI — gives a stirring patriotic speech to his assembled men who have been ordered to return to the front. He faces his men from a balcony above them so that their backs are to the camera, a mass of faceless men. Later on in the film, after we have discovered that Baxter is an incompetent and dangerous officer, this scene is repeated. He speaks the same words to his men — many of whom are replacements for those killed in the first assignment — but they ring even more hollow because of what we now know about Baxter's character. When Baxter is blinded in battle, he is relieved of his command by Frederic March, who has proven himself throughout the film to be a man of bravery and intelligence. The film ends with March standing above his men from the same balcony as Baxter did earlier, giving the same speech while the camera pans over the watching faces of his men. This slight concluding twist (which anticipates that of Ford's **Fort Apache** and the Wayne/Fonda relationship in that film) is jarring because although March has earned our support, he has begun to sound like and adopt the mannerisms of Baxter, making us once again fearful of the fate of the men dependent on his leadership. Another cycle bas begun.

Twentieth Century (1934) is similarly constructed, but for comic rather than dramatically ironic effect. John Barrymore is a mad, egotistical theatrical producer and Carole Lombard is his inexperienced protegé. The film opens at a rehearsal for a new production which is going poorly due to Lombard's inept acting. Barrymore marks out simple stage directions in chalk on the floor, which soon becomes a maze of intersecting white lines. The end of the film, after Barrymore has expended vast energy and chicanery to get Lombard to work with him again, takes place at another play rehearsal — same speech to the actors, same southern belle role for Lombard, same chalk on the floor. It is not the most subtle of contrivances, but it does work in a predictable way. This book-end approach is generally more understandable and functional on the stage than on film, where there are so many more options available. **Twentieth Century** plainly shows its source as a play which Hawks, Hecht and MacArthur transplanted to the screen. It is divided neatly into scenes at the theatre, in an apartment, on the train, so that one might call it a three-act movie.

Even those films that are not so obviously bracketed and stage-derived share this inclination toward compartmentation of scenes and reaching back to the start of the film for an ending. Miriam Hopkins steps off the boat in **Barbary Coast** (1935) — as Jean Arthur would in **Only Angels Have Wings** — and is rowed to "the gates of El Dorado" by Walter Brennan through the fog off the coast of San Francisco. The climax has Hopkins and Joel McCrea rowing back toward the boat in an attempt to escape from Edward G. Robinson. **The Crowd Roars** (1932) begins and ends with an automobile race, showing the compulsive behavior of those men attracted to the lure of dangerous competition. The beginning of **Bringing Up Baby** (1938) has Gary Grant painstakingly assembling the bones of a dinosaur, a task to which he has devoted years of his life, whereas the film's conclusion is the crumbling decomposition of that dinosaur — an event that symbolizes Grant's breaking away from the regimentation of his past. Within the films, Hawks sticks to a few basic settings: the *Bella Donna*, the cabin and the newspaper office in **Barbary Coast**; the race track, garage and apartments in **The Crowd Roars**; the battlefield, barracks and hospital in **The Road to Glory**. Hawks's characters exist in a limited environment, within a sharply defined structure, in an attempt to give order to a chaotic world.

Muni, Raft & Dvorak in ***Scarface***

You and Me Against the World

It's a protective, somewhat distrusting instinct that makes the characters in a Hawks film huddle together to keep out foreign elements. A feeling that there are two species of human on the planet, and it's them against us, permeates Hawks's work not only in the thirties but throughout his career. Hawks creates enclaves, self-contained territories where, hopefully, his people are safe. There is also an acknowledgement in his films that a person must have someone that he or she can depend on above all others if one is to survive.

In his comedies, this conviction is usu-

ally expressed through one character trying to convince another that he or she is, in fact, the soul-mate to the other and not one of "them". Barrymore, having changed Carole Lombard from Mildred Plotka, lingerie salesgirl to Lily Garland, star of Broadway and Hollywood, has to win her back not only for financial reasons, but because he is incomplete without her. Lombard is tricked into signing the new contract, and protests at Barrymore's dictatorial direction, but she also knows that he stirs something in her and that they belong together, if only as mutual confirmation of each other's worth as artists among the philistines. Alone together in their apartment, or in the train compartment, they feed each other's egos, no matter how much Lombard complains about being a prisoner.

Similarly, in **Bringing Up Baby**, Katherine Hepburn sees potential in Cary Grant that he himself does not, and actually rebels against. She brings out something in him that makes it impossible to return to his prior existence as a preserver of fossils. They become allies against a common enemy: everybody else. Parenthetically, Barrymore's wheedling Lombard back to the fold in **Twentieth Century**, adapted for the screen by Hecht and MacArthur, corresponds to the relationship of Cary Grant and Rosalind Russell in **His Girl Friday**, based on their **Front Page**. In both cases, the ostensible reason for the campaign is professional, but the real motive is to enlist support against the nameless antagonist.

Shelter is what these characters are looking for, and some Hawks people discover one another in their attempt to find it. Miriam Hopkins has an argument with Edward G. Robinson and rides from the *Bella Donna*, getting caught in a downpour. She finds Joel McCrea in a cabin with a fire, and she is momentarily protected not only from the rain, but from her identity as Robinson's mistress, which she does not reveal. Two outsiders, lured to San Francisco by the promise of gold, McCrea and Hopkins have come in out of the storm (the corrupt, hostile influence) and found each other for comfort. That Hopkins while in the cabin strips off the clothes that Robinson gave her (they're soaked), confirms her desire to shed what they represent and become a new person with McCrea.

There is an analogous occurence in **The Road to Glory** when Fredric March and June Lang meet for the first time. There is an air attack, all the lights are put out, and people run for cover. Through the window of a basement where he's hiding, March sees Lang's legs and takes her in. He plays the piano for her ("I'm establishing a mood"), but she doesn't respond ("I'm a veteran, too"). They part, but following a battle March looks for her in the hospital where she works, follows her to a restaurant and takes her back to the candlelit basement with the piano. This time she is more submissive. In that basement March and Lang are immune to the war

Barrymore & Lombard in ***Twentieth Century***

around them, to her other entanglement, to his responsibility. There, in their temporary haven, their union can be sealed.

Often, however, a fortress proves to be of little use against the elements closing in — as in the climactic sequence of **Scarface** — especially if one is defending it all alone. The bizarre relationship between Paul Muni and Ann Dvorak as brother and sister in **Scarface** comes to a dramatic head in the barricaded offices that Muni built himself for protection. Fighting valiantly, hysterically, side by side as a barrage of bullets is fired at them, Muni and Dvorak give each other a bit of hope that perhaps they may endure. Their kinship, Dvorak's admitting that they are alike, of the same blood despite Muni's brutal treatment of her, fire them up to an exhilarating, if futile confidence within their dark steel walls. When his sister is shot, Muni becomes helpless, unable to continue the fruitless struggle. In his one last, pitiful stab at defiance, he is machine-gunned to the ground. For those few moments fighting together to defend their lives and their blockaded asylum, the punk gangster and the flighty flapper achieve a sort of manic, ridiculous heroism that only a helpless team effort can produce.

One man-woman relationship that results in a kind of moral redemption occurs in **The Crowd Roars**, and it hinges on a man's realization that he can't make it alone, that he must learn to depend on others. In this film James Cagney plays Joe, a racing driver who abandons his girlfriend Lee (Ann Dvorak), alienates the people around him and indirectly causes the racing accident that kills his best friend. He becomes incapable of driving, takes to alcohol and is generally washed up. Lee, knowing that Joe will be at Indianapolis for a big race, goes there to be with him. She takes a job as a waitress at the track diner, and that is where she and Joe meet again. After initial embarrassment, he lets her take him up to her room, where he finally breaks down and cries in her arms, in what for Hawks is a rare display of emotion on the part of one of his characters, who usually suppress personal feelings under a banner of professionalism. Restored to life by the love of a good woman, Joe is able to assist in the winning of the race and reunite himself with his brother and friends. For all of his preoccupation with men in groups, Hawks more often than not ends his films with the basic form of union and security, a male and a female, although the female up until that point may have caused more trouble than she's worth. And although it is Lee who makes it possible for Joe to piece himself together, it is not Lee with whom Joe rides off in the last scene of the film, as we shall see later.

The men-in-groups theme is another variation on the Hawks notion of people joining together in a self-styled environment to ward off the devils of the outside world. Men together are a competent,

Hawks will generally introduce a device, an object or some sort of sign that, as the film progresses, develops into a key element either thematically or in terms of furthering the narrative.

functioning unit and women, while nice to have around, are clogs in the machinery, a reminder of the perils out there. **Tiger Shark** (1932) has just such a situation. The men on the tuna-fishing boat have created a self-contained mini-world entirely separate from their lives on shore. On the sea they deal with sharks, on land they deal with women, and either can be fatal. It's man against nature in both places, but on the boat each man knows his duty and knows his enemy. Women are less predictable than sharks. It is like this also in **Only Angels Have Wings** (1939), in which men deal as a matter of routine with death and injury but find it hard to cope with Jean Arthur and Rita Hayworth. A woman is likely to split the group asunder, and once a man is left on his own he is vulnerable.

Triangles

A man and a woman can block for one another in the films of Howard Hawks and form a practical team, and men banded together are capable of just about anything, but three is definitely an unlucky number. In so many of his films there exists a relationship between two people that is either threatened or destroyed by the intrusion of a third party. There are many varieties of the triad, and the principals involved handle the complexities of an extra-sided affair with varying degrees of success. Sometimes the conflict is solved amiably, sometimes drastic events are needed to settle the matter, but one way or another the threesome untangles.

Two of the most interesting Hawksian triangles of this period are composed not of the usual combination of two men after the same girl, or the other way around, but of two siblings and an outsider. Tony Camonte (Muni) in **Scarface** tries desperately to keep his sister Cesca from becoming romantically involved with any man, to the point of becoming violent if he catches her dancing with somebody. When he discovers that she is staying in an apartment with a gangster crony of his, played by George Raft, he goes there intending to kill him, which he does, not realizing that they had been married. Camonte's slightly perverse attitude toward his sister, which culminates in that shootout described earlier, is not very different from the central relationship in **The Crowd Roars**.

Ann Dvorak is once again at the apex, but not in the same way. In this film she is the racer's girlfriend who is cast aside not for the stock reasons, but because Joe feels that she is setting a poor example for his younger brother. Like the mobster in **Scarface**, the elder brother is trying to shield his younger sibling from the realities of life. This odd triangle in which Joe undergoes sexual sacrifice for the "good" of his kid brother becomes an even more bizarre quadrangle when a friend of Lee, played by Joan Blondell, decides to seduce the young driver to teach his guardian a lesson. The fury with which Joe reacts — and we must keep in mind that Hawks categorically denies homosexual implications in any of his films — becomes the fuse for a fatal accident and the condition we find him in before Lee meets up with him at the diner. As was mentioned earlier, the conclusion of the film finds not Cagney and Dvorak locked in a clinch (the standard Hollywood fadeout), but Cagney and his kid brother riding to the hospital in an ambulance, challenging another ambulance to a race. This restoration of the family unit is at least as important to Hawks as the fact that the two lovers have reunited. In this case, man-woman bonds share the spotlight with the bond between brothers. It is rare, however, that such a solution amicable to all concerned comes about.

A more common, and ill-fated three-cornered liaison is the focal point of **Tiger Shark**, in which the friendship of Edward G. Robinson and Richard Arlen is tested by the presence of Zita Johann. Her father, a crew member on Robinson's fishing boat, is killed and Robinson takes her under his care, finally proposing marriage. Although she doesn't love him, she consents to the wedding out of a sense of obligation. When Arlen and the girl meet, there is an obvious attraction between them, but she is determined to remain loyal. Robinson gets drunk at his wedding and Arlen says, "I'll take care of him", to which Johann replies, "That's my job now, isn't it?". Arlen's place in the life of his friend has been taken over by an outsider with whom he, too, is in love. As Robinson unwittingly states, "We're one big happy family."

The family comes apart in one tense scene on the fishing boat. Johann has come along on this trip, and she and Arlen are alone in a cabin while Robinson is on deck. While the two declare their love for each other, we can hear, from outside, the sound of Robinson firing a gun. The gunfire goes on through the Arlen-Johann conversation, then as they kiss we realize that the sound has stopped, that Robinson is in the doorway, watching them. In a rage, Robinson knocks out Arlen, drags him to a small boat and sends him out to sea for the sharks ("They settle everything"). Robinson is pulled into the infested water by a rope, Arlen saves himself and he and Johann kneel on either side of Robinson as he dies. Having unsuspectingly brought his best friend and his wife together, Robinson must be eliminated from the picture so that their alliance might have no barrier.

Because of Warner Baxter's helpless dependency on her, June Lang in **The Road to Glory** is reluctant to break off with him or tell him about her association with Fredric March. The borderline hostility between the two officers becomes heightened when Baxter finds a necklace belonging to Lang in March's room. He takes back a package that March was to give Lang in the event of Baxter's death and says, "There's no more reason why you should come out of this alive than I ... perhaps not as much".

The turning point of this strained situation comes in as dramatic a manner as that in **Tiger Shark**. Following a long, brutal battle, the men return to camp. At the hospital, while getting a shot in his wounded arm, March embraces Lang and they kiss. Suddenly, Baxter walks in on them. Caught in the act, the two lovers hastily reveal the nature of their relationship. Only it is revealed that Baxter has been blinded and so, of course, had no way of knowing what was going on. The tragedy of Baxter's handicap and his loss of his girl is somewhat compensated for by the smoothing out of his harsh feelings towards his father, who volunteers to be his son's eyes. The self-knowledge he has gained and the solidifying of the familial link is at least minor consolation for the loss of eyesight and the pitying affection of a woman who really cared very little for him.

The swaggering gambling czar played by Edward G. Robinson in **Barbary Coast** is both more perceptive and less fortunate in his relationship with Miriam Hopkins (who, manning the roulette wheel bedecked in feathers, is a pale foreshadowing of Angie Dickinson in **Rio Bravo**). In turning over the woman he loves to a poet from Gramercy Park, he is recognizing the fact that she could never respond to his love as totally as she could to McCrea, and is also walking into the hands of a vigilante lynch mob. All through the film he complains to Hopkins, whom he is keeping as a reluctant, though well taken care of, mistress, that she never gives herself to him with love. When she promises to do so if he will spare McCrea, Robinson knows that his request is hopeless. Once again, as in **Tiger Shark** and **The Road to Glory**, it is a matter of a union based on love triumphing over one formed by pity or convenience.

In the two comedies under consideration, Hawks uses the third party less as a concrete threat to the pair that fate has brought together than as an abstraction, designed to represent the humdrum outside world. Cary Grant's stuffy, anti-sexual fiancé in **Bringing Up Baby** appears

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is an unnecessary distraction.
er handled is the adoption of "I
You Anything But Love" as the
Bringing Up Baby. The sight of
Hepburn warbling this old
either of a pair of look-alike
one of the more genuinely hu-
utines in this extremely well
t slightly overrated comedy.
so integrated into the fabric of
d such a likeable song as well,
ve You..." does not wear nearly
does "Jeannie" in the almost
bly silly **Barbary Coast**.

Hawks's favorite prop by far
two people together — visual-
friendship or sexual attraction
em — is a cigarette, he has on
employed other handy objects
urpose. At the first play re-
Twentieth Century, Lombard
it a loud, horrified scream. Af-
ing many weak attempts at the
arrymore takes matters into his
s by jabbing a hatpin into his
end, thus producing a shriek of
d pitch and volume. Lombard
become a famous actress and
pany with Barrymore but, it
she carries the prodding instru-
g with her at all times, gently
s own pin cushion.

in which George Raft and Ann
ake initial contact in **Scarface**
e Raft's trademark throughout
areer. He is in the street, flip-
in, standing next to an organ
d monkey. Dvorak is upstairs
t of her window, sees the mon-
osses a coin down. Raft catches
it, pockets his coin and begins to flip
Dvorak's. Both these objects — the pin
and the coin — materially symbolize the
start of the associations between Bar-
rymore and Lombard and Raft and
Dvorak. (Dvorak, by the way, is the only
woman to appear in two Hawks films dur-
ing the thirties, and it's easy to see why.
With her mobile, broomstick-thin body,
dark saucer eyes and brittle voice that
tends to squeak at times of emotional in-
tensity, she has the physical angularity
and internal strength that Hawks admires
in an actress and is rare for her time.)

Tiger Shark is filled with revealing
scenes and bits of acting business that
refer to other Hawks films, give depth to
the characters and fulfill a number of
dramatic functions. Hawks's attitude to-
ward death is shown in the film by Rob-
inson's entrance into the house of the
dead man's daughter, dropping on the
floor the satchel with the deceased's
name and possessions. "He was a very
good fisherman", Robinson says, "but
very old." This equating of the sum of a
man's life with his accumulated articles
and professional competence is found
later in many Hawks films, specifically
Only Angels Have Wings and **Air Force**.
Cigarettes figure prominently in **Tiger
Shark**, as they do in other of his films.
When Robinson asks Johann (who is, like
June Lang, a veteran) to move in with him,
she replies by asking for a match, and
Arlen does a cigarette-swallowing trick
early in the film that is varied as a comic
interlude later on.

The most fully developed gesture in
Tiger Shark is utilized to connote the na-
ture of the friendship between Robinson
and Arlen. Throughout the movie, from
the time that Robinson loses his hand to
the sharks, he uses his hook to scratch
Arlen's back. This even occurs during the
Robinson-Johann wedding ceremony,
which begins with a close-up of the hook,
when Arlen, the best man, gets fidgety. At
the end of the film, after Robinson learns
of the betrayal and has tried to sacrifice
Arlen to the sharks, he himself is on the
threshold of death with, as was noted pre-
viously, his wife and best friend on either
side of him. Just before he dies, with the
sound of a heavenly choir on the sound-
track, Robinson scratches Arlen on the
back with his good hand, which is resting
on Arlen's shoulder at the moment of
death.

This final image, while a simple enough
reversal, is a good indication of how
Hawks elaborates on one small, repeated
action until it becomes a direct metaphor
for something much larger. There are
many other illustrations of this approach:
the inability of Camonte's secretary to get
a name from anyone on the telephone in
Scarface; the "Repent! The time is at
hand" stickers in **Twentieth Century**; Li-
onel Barrymore's attachment to his bugle
in **The Road to Glory** — all of which point
out Hawks's ability to focus on a specific
detail and follow it to its dramatic, or
comic, conclusion.

Semi-Coda

Howard Hawks's movies of the first
sound decade are rich in cross-refer-
ences, complex character relationships,
noble and absurd moments recorded by
one of the cinema's first-class story tell-
ers. In shaving his narrative down to its
primal components, and caring little for
technical embellishment, Hawks from
time to time lapses into unambitious com-
petence; rooted set-pieces, stagey en-
trances and exits, conventional editing.
But these faults (if they can be construed
as such) are rare, and in any case are far
outweighed by his feel for atmosphere
(there is seldom a Hawks film where one
is disoriented as to space for even a mo-
ment), character detail, interrelationships
and men-action.

Although he went on to direct individual
films on a par with his best in the 1930s
— **His Girl Friday, To Have and Have Not,
Red River, Rio Bravo** — Hawks seems to
have worked at a feverish creative pitch
during those earlier years that produced in
sheer volume and quality a body of work
that many able filmmakers fail to turn out
in an entire career. That this study passed
over such movies as **Dawn Patrol, Ceiling
Zero** and **Only Angels Have Wings** begins
to indicate the depth of Hawks's
thirties' films and the scrutiny to
which they are entitled.

END

A Sergeant in [illegible] instance, is always whistling "La Marseillaise", the song that his music box plays. The constant whistling quite naturally gets on the nerves of the rest of the men, who insist that he stop. He doesn't, and the anthem becomes at various times in the film a tension-breaking comic relief. The troops go into prolonged battle, over hills through gunfire and mine explosives, and Hawks cuts from this scene to church services where Monique (June Lang) is praying for the men's safety. When Hawks cuts back to the Gregg Toland-photographed battlefield, the site is expansive, barren and silent. It is not until we hear the by now familiar whistling of "La Marseillaise" that we know that at least one member of the regiment, hiding in a foxhole out of sight, is all right. What begins as a seemingly peripheral motif becomes at that moment a relaxing signal that all is well.

This is an uncommon case in which Hawks uses music as a conscious means of setting the audience up for a specific effect. More often, in his movies of the '30s, music plays a role of little importance. Hawks has recently said that he regrets having used "Jeannie with the Light Brown Hair" in **Barbary Coast**, as well he should. In the typical Hollywood mode, the song, none too inspiring to begin with, becomes irritating in its constant repetition. And since it has no real relationship to either the plot or theme of

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Hawks will generally introduce a device, an
that, as the film progresses, develops into a key eler
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functioning unit and women, while nice to have around, are clogs in the machinery, a reminder of the perils out there. **Tiger Shark** (1932) has just such a situation. The men on the tuna-fishing boat have created a self-contained mini-world entirely separate from their lives on shore. On the sea they deal with sharks, on land they deal with women, and either can be fatal. It's man against nature in both places, but on the boat each man knows his duty and knows his enemy. Women are less predictable than sharks. It is like this also in **Only Angels Have Wings** (1939), in which men deal as a matter of routine with death and injury but find it hard to cope with Jean Arthur and Rita Hayworth. A woman is likely to split the group asunder, and once a man is left on his own he is vulnerable.

Triangles

A man and a woman can block for one another in the films of Howard Hawks and form a practical team, and men banded together are capable of just about anything, but three is definitely an unlucky number. In so many of his films there exists a relationship between two people that is either threatened or destroyed by the intrusion of a third party. There are many varieties of the triad, and the principals involved handle the complexities of an extra-sided affair with varying degrees of success. Sometimes the conflict is solved amiably, sometimes drastic events are needed to settle the matter, but one way or another the threesome untangles.

Two of the most interesting Hawksian triangles of this period are composed not of the usual combination of two men after the same girl, or the other way around, but of two siblings and an outsider. Tony Camonte (Muni) in **Scarface** tries desperately to keep his sister Cesca from becoming romantically involved with any man, to the point of becoming violent if he catches her dancing with somebody. When he discovers that she is staying in an apartment with a gangster crony of his, played by George Raft, he goes there intending to kill him, which he does, not realizing that they had been married. Camonte's slightly perverse attitude toward his sister, which culminates in that shootout described earlier, is not very different from the central relationship in **The Crowd Roars**.

Ann Dvorak is once again at the apex, but not in the same way. In this film she is the racer's girlfriend who is cast aside not for the stock reasons, but because Joe feels that she is setting a poor example for his younger brother. Like the mobster in **Scarface**, the elder brother is trying to shield his younger sibling from the realities of life. This odd triangle in which Joe undergoes sexual sacrifice "good" of his kid brother bec even more bizarre quadrangle friend of Lee, played by Joan decides to seduce the young teach his guardian a lesson. The which Joe reacts — and we mus mind that Hawks categorically d mosexual implications in any of — becomes the fuse for a fatal and the condition we find him Lee meets up with him at the was mentioned earlier, the conc the film finds not Cagney anc locked in a clinch (the standard H fadeout), but Cagney and his ki riding to the hospital in an an challenging another ambulance t This restoration of the family t least as important to Hawks as that the two lovers have reunite case, man-woman bonds sl spotlight with the bond between It is rare, however, that such a amicable to all concerned comes

A more common, and ill-fat cornered liaison is the focal poir **Shark**, in which the friendship c G. Robinson and Richard Arlen by the presence of Zita Johann ther, a crew member on Robinson's fishing boat, is killed and Robinson takes her under his care, finally proposing marriage. Although she doesn't love him, she consents to the wedding out of a sense of obligation. When Arlen and the girl meet, there is an obvious attraction between them, but she is determined to remain loyal. Robinson gets drunk at his wedding and Arlen says, "I'll take care of him", to which Johann replies, "That's my job now, isn't it?". Arlen's place in the life of his friend has been taken over by an outsider with whom he, too, is in love. As Robinson unwittingly states, "We're one big happy family."

The family comes apart in one tense scene on the fishing boat. Johann has come along on this trip, and she and Arlen are alone in a cabin while Robinson is on deck. While the two declare their love for each other, we can hear, from outside, the sound of Robinson firing a gun. The gunfire goes on through the Arlen-Johann conversation, then as they kiss we realize that the sound has stopped, that Robinson is in the doorway, watching them. In a rage, Robinson knocks out Arlen, drags him to a small boat and sends him out to sea for the sharks ("They settle everything"). Robinson is pulled into the infested water by a rope, Arlen saves himself and he and Johann kneel on either side of Robinson as he dies. Having unsuspectingly brought his best friend and his wife together, Robinson must be eliminated from the picture so that their alli-

[illegible] tools to be his seeing eyes. This self-knowledge he has gained and the solidifying of the familial link is at least minor consolation for the loss of eyesight and the pitying affection of a woman who really cared very little for him.

The swaggering gambling czar played by Edward G. Robinson in **Barbary Coast** is both more perceptive and less fortunate in his relationship with Miriam Hopkins (who, manning the roulette wheel bedecked in feathers, is a pale foreshadowing of Angie Dickinson in **Rio Bravo**). In turning over the woman he loves to a poet from Gramercy Park, he is recognizing the fact that she could never respond to his love as totally as she could to McCrea, and is also walking into the hands of a vigilante lynch mob. All through the film he complains to Hopkins, whom he is keeping as a reluctant, though well taken care of, mistress, that she never gives herself to him with love. When she promises to do so if he will spare McCrea, Robinson knows that his request is hopeless. Once again, as in **Tiger Shark** and **The Road to Glory**, it is a matter of a union based on love triumphing over one formed by pity or convenience.

In the two comedies under consideration, Hawks uses the third party less as a concrete threat to the pair that fate has brought together than as an abstraction, designed to represent the humdrum outside world. Cary Grant's stuffy, anti-sexual fiancé in **Bringing Up Baby** appears

during the film only briefly, to contrast with Hepburn's giddy, outgoing personality — as an unattractive alternative. Whereas the fiancé demands that their marriage be a professional one, and that Grant must at all times be dignified, Hepburn attempts to loosen him up and add spontaneity to his life. Carole Lombard is faced with the same kind of choice in **Twentieth Century**. The society lout who boards the train with her, with his conventional morality and slow wit, is clearly no match for the adventure promised by going back to work for the antic Svengali played by Barrymore. By making one side of the triangle seem bland and almost non-human, Hawks makes it inconceivable that the man or woman in the middle could opt for stability over impulsiveness. Once the mad pursuer begins testing the responses of the confused pursued, it is a *fait accompli*. Normality hasn't got a chance.

Motif, Gesture & Bits of Business

Early on in a film, Hawks will generally introduce a device, an object or some sort of sign, visual or aural, that, as the film progresses, develops into a key element either thematically or in terms of furthering the narrative. It may be used to provide a link between characters, heighten a dramatic moment or thread separate images into a whole. The series of X-marks-the-spot murders and Cook's Tours sign in **Scarface** are well known, but there are many other examples of Hawks's tendency to plant something in the viewer's mind for future reference.

A Sergeant in **The Road to Glory**, as one instance, is always whistling "La Marseillaise", the song that his music box plays. The constant whistling quite naturally gets on the nerves of the rest of the men, who insist that he stop. He doesn't, and the anthem becomes at various times in the film a tension-breaking comic relief. The troops go into prolonged battle, over hills through gunfire and mine explosives, and Hawks cuts from this scene to church services where Monique (June Lang) is praying for the men's safety. When Hawks cuts back to the Gregg Toland-photographed battlefield, the site is expansive, barren and silent. It is not until we hear the by now familiar whistling of "La Marseillaise" that we know that at least one member of the regiment, hiding in a foxhole out of sight, is all right. What begins as a seemingly peripheral motif becomes at that moment a relaxing signal that all is well.

This is an uncommon case in which Hawks uses music as a conscious means of setting the audience up for a specific effect. More often, in his movies of the '30s, music plays a role of little importance. Hawks has recently said that he regrets having used "Jeannie with the Light Brown Hair" in **Barbary Coast**, as well he should. In the typical Hollywood mode, the song, none too inspiring to begin with, becomes irritating in its constant repetition. And since it has no real relationship to either the plot or theme of the film, it is an unnecessary distraction. Much better handled is the adoption of "I Can't Give You Anything But Love" as the theme for **Bringing Up Baby**. The sight of Grant and Hepburn warbling this old chestnut to either of a pair of look-alike leopards is one of the more genuinely humorous routines in this extremely well played but slightly overrated comedy. Since it is so integrated into the fabric of the film and such a likeable song as well, "I Can't Give You..." does not wear nearly as thin as does "Jeannie" in the almost incomparably silly **Barbary Coast**.

Although Hawks's favorite prop by far for joining two people together — visualizing the friendship or sexual attraction between them — is a cigarette, he has on occasion employed other handy objects for this purpose. At the first play rehearsal in **Twentieth Century**, Lombard has to emit a loud, horrified scream. After witnessing many weak attempts at the scream, Barrymore takes matters into his own hands by jabbing a hatpin into his star's rear end, thus producing a shriek of the desired pitch and volume. Lombard goes on to become a famous actress and parts company with Barrymore but, it turns out, she carries the prodding instrument along with her at all times, gently placed in its own pin cushion.

The way in which George Raft and Ann Dvorak make initial contact in **Scarface** has become Raft's trademark throughout his long career. He is in the street, flipping a coin, standing next to an organ grinder and monkey. Dvorak is upstairs looking out of her window, sees the monkey and tosses a coin down. Raft catches it, pockets his coin and begins to flip Dvorak's. Both these objects — the pin and the coin — materially symbolize the start of the associations between Barrymore and Lombard and Raft and Dvorak. (Dvorak, by the way, is the only woman to appear in two Hawks films during the thirties, and it's easy to see why. With her mobile, broomstick-thin body, dark saucer eyes and brittle voice that tends to squeak at times of emotional intensity, she has the physical angularity and internal strength that Hawks admires in an actress and is rare for her time.)

Tiger Shark is filled with revealing scenes and bits of acting business that refer to other Hawks films, give depth to the characters and fulfill a number of dramatic functions. Hawks's attitude toward death is shown in the film by Robinson's entrance into the house of the dead man's daughter, dropping on the floor the satchel with the deceased's name and possessions. "He was a very good fisherman", Robinson says, "but very old." This equating of the sum of a man's life with his accumulated articles and professional competence is found later in many Hawks films, specifically **Only Angels Have Wings** and **Air Force**. Cigarettes figure prominently in **Tiger Shark**, as they do in other of his films. When Robinson asks Johann (who is, like June Lang, a veteran) to move in with him, she replies by asking for a match, and Arlen does a cigarette-swallowing trick early in the film that is varied as a comic interlude later on.

The most fully developed gesture in **Tiger Shark** is utilized to connote the nature of the friendship between Robinson and Arlen. Throughout the movie, from the time that Robinson loses his hand to the sharks, he uses his hook to scratch Arlen's back. This even occurs during the Robinson-Johann wedding ceremony, which begins with a close-up of the hook, when Arlen, the best man, gets fidgety. At the end of the film, after Robinson learns of the betrayal and has tried to sacrifice Arlen to the sharks, he himself is on the threshold of death with, as was noted previously, his wife and best friend on either side of him. Just before he dies, with the sound of a heavenly choir on the soundtrack, Robinson scratches Arlen on the back with his good hand, which is resting on Arlen's shoulder at the moment of death.

This final image, while a simple enough reversal, is a good indication of how Hawks elaborates on one small, repeated action until it becomes a direct metaphor for something much larger. There are many other illustrations of this approach: the inability of Camonte's secretary to get a name from anyone on the telephone in **Scarface**; the "Repent! The time is at hand" stickers in **Twentieth Century**; Lionel Barrymore's attachment to his bugle in **The Road to Glory** — all of which point out Hawks's ability to focus on a specific detail and follow it to its dramatic, or comic, conclusion.

Semi-Coda

Howard Hawks's movies of the first sound decade are rich in cross-references, complex character relationships, noble and absurd moments recorded by one of the cinema's first-class story tellers. In shaving his narrative down to its primal components, and caring little for technical embellishment, Hawks from time to time lapses into unambitious competence; rooted set-pieces, stagey entrances and exits, conventional editing. But these faults (if they can be construed as such) are rare, and in any case are far outweighed by his feel for atmosphere (there is seldom a Hawks film where one is disoriented as to space for even a moment), character detail, interrelationships and men-action.

Although he went on to direct individual films on a par with his best in the 1930s — **His Girl Friday, To Have and Have Not, Red River, Rio Bravo** — Hawks seems to have worked at a feverish creative pitch during those earlier years that produced in sheer volume and quality a body of work that many able filmmakers fail to turn out in an entire career. That this study passed over such movies as **Dawn Patrol, Ceiling Zero** and **Only Angels Have Wings** begins to indicate the depth of Hawks's thirties' films and the scrutiny to which they are entitled.

COLOMBO'S HOLLYWOOD QUOTATIONS

"The only thing I like about being an actress,"
admitted Elizabeth Ashley,
"is acting."

"I'm not,"
barked Lauren Bacall,
"a member of the weaker sex."

"I wish,"
continued Ronald Colman,
"I might find my Shangri-La."

"I survived,"
declared Bette Davis,
"because I was tougher than everybody else."

"Ah,"
enunciated Nelson Eddy,
"sweet mystery of life!"

"Don't drink the water,"
forewarned W.C. Fields,
"fish fuck in it."

"Hollywood,"
groaned Lillian Gish,
"is an emotional Detroit."

"I like to wake up,"
hissed Jean Harlow,
"feeling a new man."

"A screenwriter is a man who is being tortured to confess,"
interjected Christopher Isherwood,
"and has nothing to confess."

"Wait a minute!"
joshed Al Jolson,
"You ain't heard nothin' yet!"

"Paradise,"
knew Hildegard Knef,
"has palm trees."

"Let's face it,"
laughed Angela Lansbury,
"I've finally arrived."

"You survive bad pictures,"
mumbled Robert Mitchum.
"Look at Rin-Tin-Tin."

"I loved him not as one artist loves another,"
noted Pola Negri,
"but as a woman loves a man."

"I am no longer concerned
with anything but the image,"
observed Max Ophuls.

"Nobody would be in this business,"
philosophized Vincent Price,
"if he were normal."

"In Europe, an actor is an artist,"
quipped Anthony Quinn.
"In Hollywood, if he isn't working, he's a bum."

"You are your
own instrument,"
reflected Lee Remick.

"Oh, the parties
we used to have!"
sighed Gloria Swanson.

"What do you expect me to do?"'
throbbed Elizabeth Taylor.
"Sleep alone?"

"If Botticelli were alive today,"
uttered Peter Ustinov,
"he'd be working for Vogue."

"Heaven knows,"
ventured Rudolph Valentino,
"I'm no sheik."

"Who the hell,"
winked Harry Warner,
"wants to hear actors talk?"

"I have no place to go,"
explained Francis X. Bushman,
"but down."

"If you want a place in the sun,"
yawned Loretta Young,
"You have to expect a few blisters."

"For God's sake,"
zapped Darryl F. Zanuck,
"don't say yes until I've finished talking."

John Robert Colombo, the son of a producer of industrial films, has had a dozen books published — including anthologies, his own verse, found poems, and (most spectacularly) Colombo's Canadian Quotations (735 pages, 6000 quotes, four years of research). Colombo claims to have some 2000 remarks by film people on file in his Toronto home.

Sympathy would be on my side if people knew the whole story of our marriage. (Eddie Fisher)
A man has really to love a woman to go to such lengths to dominate her. (Richard Burton)

My toughest role was learning to grow up.

I have the face and body of a woman
and the mind of a child.

I need strength in a man more than any other quality.

I don't go around breaking up homes.
You can't break up a happy home.
Theirs was never happy.

What do you expect me to do? Sleep alone?
You've got to pay for everything. Nothing's free.

My marriage is dead and buried.
It will be fun to be the first Jewish Queen of Egypt.

What, when drunk, one sees in other women, one sees in Garbo sober. (Kenneth Tynan)
By being worried by the entire world, she gives you the feeling that if your imagination has to sin, it can at least congratulate itself on its impeccable taste. (Alistair Cooke)

How wonderful to be happy for no reason.

I give them everything I've got on the screen —
why do they try to usurp my privacy?
People take energy from me, and I want it for my pictures.

The truth is, I feel able to express myself
only through my roles, not in words,
and that is why I try to avoid talking to the press!
Well, Gentlemen. As usual I have nothing to say!

Sometimes I feel sorry
for everybody in the whole world.

I never said, "I want to be alone."
I only said, "I want to be *let* alone."
There is all the difference.

I knew I was too happy.
I suppose I'm just drifting.

I've become afraid of life...
What does it matter what I think?
I have nothing to contribute,
I love no one.
Suppose I were to say to you
that I don't think I'm going to live very long?
I shall die a bachelor.
Dead? Dead? I have been dead many years.

She is Mother Courage in sequins. (Maurice Zolotow)
Marlene Dietrich is not an actress, like Sarah Bernhardt: She is a myth, like Phryne. (André Malraux)

Once upon a time we loved each other.

Tenderness is greater proof of love
than the most passionate of vows.

The average man is more interested
in a woman who is interested in him
than he is in a woman with beautiful legs.

I dress for the image,
not for myself,
not for the public,
not for fashion,
not for men.

Glamour: The which I would
like to know the meaning of.
Quality: There is nothing better.

I have a child.
And I have made a few people happy.
That is all...

I am at heart a gentleman.
I have anxieties, like everyone else,
but only about fate, growing old,
things beyond my control.
Not about me or my work.

Hollywood is the loneliest place
I have ever lived in.
All my friends are dead.

When I die, I'd like to be buried in Paris.
But I'd also like to leave my heart in England.
And in Germany — nothing.

I'm not much,
nothing spectacular.

I'm not afraid of life,
although I'm not afraid of death, either.
Right now the thing that worries me most
is that if I do not get back to the theatre
there will be no opening night.

Ken Russell Faces the Music

By Patrick McGilligan and Janet Maslin

"I never see films if I can possibly help it. ... I've seen enough — whereas I haven't read enough books and looked at enough sunsets."

When these interviews were being conducted, Columbia was engaged in a marketing survey that would make it official: **Tommy** would not be the film to make Ken Russell's reputation with a wide audience after all. Columbia was discovering that the likeliest audience for the picture would be young Who fans, and that if advertising the presence of such Hollywood types as Ann-Margret and Jack Nicholson at the expense of various rock stars in the cast would be a mistake, even mentioning the director's name in the ads would spell disaster.

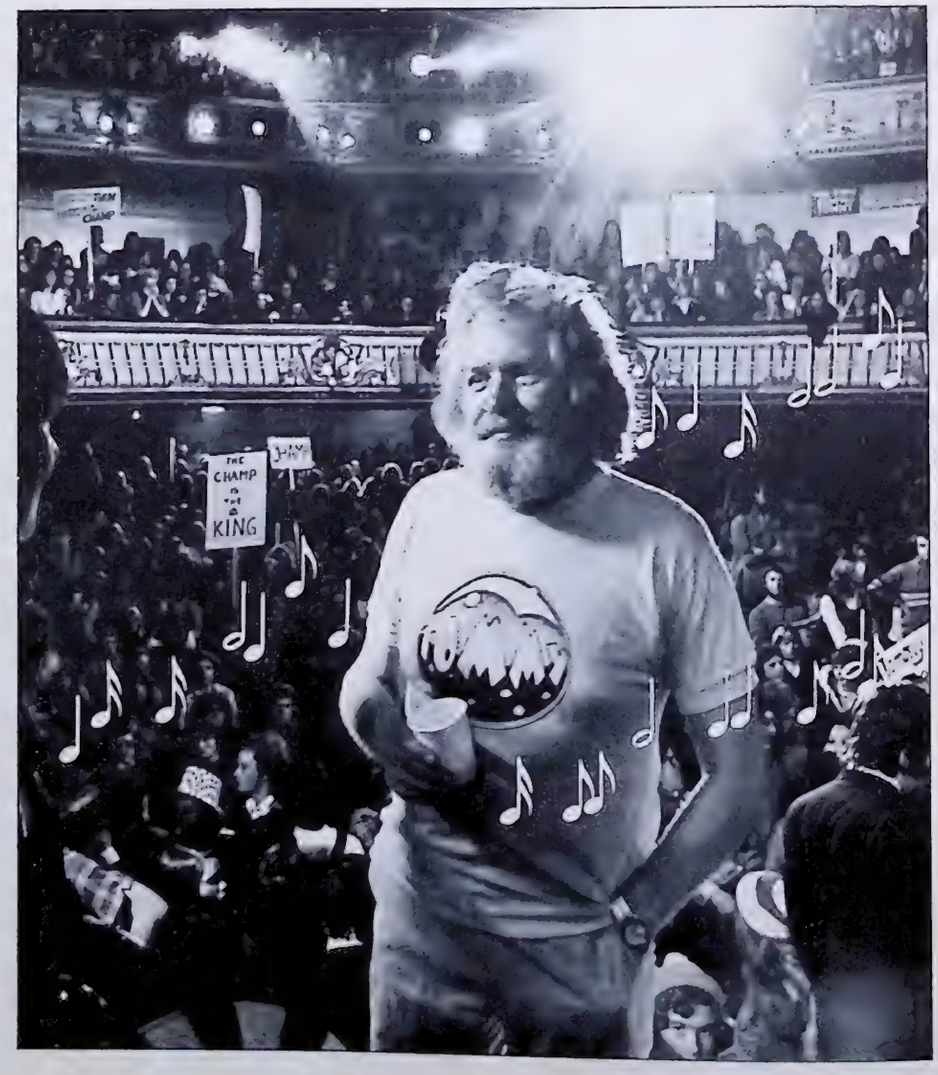
Russell was, at this stage, still hoping **Tommy** would attract a varied following, and he had no reason yet to suspect trouble — still, he seemed cheerfully resigned. The man whose **The Boyfriend** was recently cut from 140 minutes to 72 minutes for television is accustomed to unexpected disappointments.

Russell points out that, if **Tommy** was great fun to make, it is also one of his sloppier efforts, and deliberately so. The matching mistake that has a brown-eyed child growing up to be blue-eyed Roger Daltrey is especially striking, but throughout the film there are lesser examples of the same thing: curtains that aren't quite sewn together, props that keep changing, glimpses of the leading lady's underwear, even one fleeting shot of the director working a hand-held camera while Elton John sings.

Incidentally, Russell does one other brief cameo in the picture, appearing as one of the cripples Tommy promises to (but ultimately cannot) heal. Just why he deemed this sort of role appropriate is anybody's guess.

What do you like to do when you are not directing?

Russell: Sit on a mountaintop and look at the sun. Yes, and go blind in the eyes. My favorite part of the world is the Lakes District where I made **Mahler** and a dozen other films — or bits and pieces of films. It's this sort of great, rejuvenating place. It's a weird, mysterious place that I discovered about eight years ago quite by accident when I was doing some research on a film about Rosetti and the pre-Raphaelite poets. I happened to read, in my research, that one of the few places he had visited before he died was in the Lakes District. I remember going up with



Janet Maslin is film editor of The Boston Phoenix, *and a regular contributor to* New Times, The Village Voice *and* Film Comment. *Patrick McGilligan writes for* The Boston Globe *and has several books (including one each on James Cagney and Ginger Rogers) about to be published.*

my wife in a car in a very off season, March or something. One sort of went through this mountain pass and, suddenly, Shangri-La, the **Lost Horizon** bit. It did seem a very strange place and I began to realize why so many Victorian poets — Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, Southey, Coleridge and DeQuincey — gravitated towards it. It does have a very strange force behind it.

I intend, eventually, to go up there and stay up there and make my own films with a 16mm camera on, say, Wordsworth's "Preludes" — which is about his childhood up there and his mystical feelings about the place.

And never come back?

Russell: Well, rarely come back.

What is your routine when in London? Do you see many films?

Russell: I never see films if I can possibly help it. I see them for particular reasons — if I hear of an actor and people say, "Well, you're doing a film on so-and-so, so then you should certainly see so-and-so. He's a new actor." Or if I want to satirize something that I hear about — that I'm going to use in another film — like **The Exorcist**, for example, in the Liszt film. In the Liszt film, I have a scene where Liszt exorcises Wagner, so I wanted to know what the latest popular conception of exorcism was. So I went to see **The Exorcist**. I saw the tricks and it was pretty obvious how they did them. Hilariously funny, I thought.

I go to films for that reason or when I'm a captive on a boat. After lunch, there isn't much to do — although I write scripts quite a bit on boats — but if I need a bit of relaxation then I go and see the movies. When I'm actually working in London, one of the last things I want to do when I'm free is to go and sit in the black cinema when I've been in the black studio all day long. Also, I've seen so many films that I don't want to see any more. I've seen enough — whereas I haven't read enough books and I haven't looked at enough sunsets or listened to enough music. I would prefer to do those things as a priority — insofar as they are refreshers and they also help me to make the films I make. Looking at other people's films wouldn't do that at all. I don't want to be influenced by films. I have assimilated all the influences I need to keep me going for the rest of my filmic life.

I've seen a couple of American films by accident. I occasionally go. Everyone kept saying, "**Blazing Saddles, Blazing Saddles** — you must see **Blazing Saddles**," so that was the last time I actually went into a cinema and paid money and sat down and saw. I was very glad I did. On the boat to New York, I saw **Mame**, which was better than I thought it was going to be from just hearing the record. Once, when Warner Brothers was in love with me, before they wanted to murder me, they wahted me to direct it. I heard the record and I hated it. It was the antithesis of everything I like. It was despicable. So I was surprised by the film. It was nowhere near as bad as I thought it would be. Then I saw a film that I liked very much called **The Crazy World of Julius Vrooder**. It's about a mental casualty of the war and it all takes place in a mental hospital overlooking the biggest war cemetary one's ever seen. It's a very light anti-war comedy with a very delicate touch. I gather it died the death here — no one seems to have heard of it. That was the best film I've seen in a long time. And I saw a terrible comedy with George C. Scott called **The Bank Shot**. Whew. It's the only film I've fallen off to sleep in in a long, long time. Oh yes, and a quite hilarious film called **The Tamarind Seed**.

Was it intended to be hilarious?

Russell: I shouldn't have thought so — not with Omar Sharif and Julie Andrews.

How would you describe your visual aesthetic — the flashy, showy Ken Russell style?

Russell: The flashy, showy thing comes from Catholicism. I probably wasn't like that at all until I became a Catholic. Since Catholicism is a very flashy, showy religion, which isn't to say that it isn't devout or sincere or any of those things — but it just is flashy, showy, flamboyant and god-knows-what — I certainly wasn't any of those things until I saw the ... film. Film! Until I saw the film! Ha, ha, ha. I mean, until I saw the light. Well, everything's a film — **Jesus Christ Superstar**.

It's a very un-English characteristic, generally speaking, though, of course, there are exceptions. All the films that have impressed me were flamboyant. Eisenstein's films, Fritz Lang's early German expressionist films, early Griffith, **Citizen Kane**, my favorite American film. They were the ones that impressed me the most. It is as if out of kinship towards their way of looking at things. And, I suppose, being rather more inspired by music than literature, I can't hear a bit of music without seeing a picture or thinking about one. Since thoughts are pictures, it's inevitable.

Where does your love of classical music — and classical composers — derive from?

Russell: I suppose it was always there. It came when I was recovering from a slight nervous breakdown after a spell in the Merchant Navy at the end of the war. I just happened to be sitting like a vegetable in an armchair — the radio was on all the time — and, by accident, a piece of classical music came on. I sat up suddenly. I just couldn't quite believe what I was hearing. I had just never realized that such amazing sounds could be made. It was a simple, old B-flat minor Tchaikovsky piano concerto — the slow movement — which is very beautiful, absolutely sublime. From that moment, I simply rushed out and bought every classical record I could get my hands on. I have done that ever since.

How do you research the lives of the composers you later portray in film — such as Mahler?

Russell: Whenever you got a record, you just looked at the back and thought, "that's interesting." The old program note. I was always curious as to why they wrote that particular piece. From then on, the development is obvious.

By the time I came to do these musical biographies — for instance with **Mahler** — I have read his biographies, his wife's letters and everything I could lay my hands on years ago, before I ever thought of making the film. Because he interested me. I've been listening to his music for twenty years. So, when the opportunity came for me to make a film, when I felt I was ready — because there are a lot of films that I've put off because I don't feel that I'm ready to do them yet — when it actually came to doing the film, I had obviously been thinking about Mahler for twenty years. I just wrote it down, you know? It took a very short time, about three weeks. Given the facts of the man's life, given what he says about the symphonies, given the symphonies themselves and given one's train of thought, that's all one needs. It's sort of like automatic writing. It has to be organized, of course, into a form. I always work with music playing. Or, no matter what I'm doing, I never write far away from the gramophone.

What kind of attention do you give to historical fact?

Russell: Well, there are about three or four books on him which more or less repeat the same sort of thing. I met his daughter, Anna, you see, as well — she's still alive. I talked with her a lot about him. And he did say these things were in his symphonies.

When one is doing a film that is 100 minutes long, it is a question of condensation. The best example that I can give you is that there were about six men interested in his wife before Mahler died, which he knew about. I don't think she had any affairs with them but they came pretty close. She nearly ran off with one of them. The film isn't about that but that's an important part of it. He saw the threat to his marriage in terms of music — as a brutal, tough military march — so I condensed all the lovers, would-be lovers and admirers into one figure, who was the soldier, who represents the military theme. There's a sequence in the film where the love theme comes up and it's disrupted suddenly when this man appears; I just let the music carry on, the military theme comes in, the threat diminishes and the love theme comes back. So that's a good example. I get the facts, think how he handled it in his music, and that usually gives me a key as to how he condensed them in his music, and as to how I can condense them into the film.

There is a sequence on the mountaintop, where he converts from Judaism to Catholicism. I'm sure he took it with a bit of a pinch of salt, insofar as he thought it was a necessary step in his career as a

"All the films that have impressed me were flamboyant — Eisenstein's films, Fritz Lang's early expressionist films, early Griffith, **Citizen Kane.**"

conductor. He had to convince Cosima Wagner that he was an okay guy, and that's why he did it. It seemed a very cynical move. Since, even in a lot of his religious symphonies — his symphonies about death and so forth — he treats a lot of the things as a joke (I mean, he has scherzos and things, a bit of light comic relief, and he put nature worship before everything else), I treated that conversion in the same sort of way, as almost a joke. I had him jumping through Christian hoops and hammering a Jewish star which he carries into a Wagnerian cross-cum-sword — things like that. It's a lighthearted, almost Charlie Chaplin sort of sequence. It seems to upset some people.

A lot of the film is about his relationship with his wife. I mean, she said, "Oh, I'm just your shadow," and there's a sequence where she *is* just his shadow, following behind him. I dressed her exactly the same as him and put a black stocking over her face; and she's just a vague shadow of herself, ignored by everyone, while the people are all crowding round him.

Mahler was preoccupied with death. She found he was writing some songs one day on the death of children. She was furious. She said, "Why do you tempt providence like that? Why don't you write songs about the life of children, the joy of children?" He says, "Oh no, I've just got to do it." She then throws the music into the lake, and he says, "No, it's still in here," tapping his head. He went on writing, and his youngest child suddenly keeled over and died. These things seemed to happen throughout his life; he was compelled to do things which then happened.

He put a lot of his psychology, a lot of his personal life into his music. When he became jealous of his wife and they were nearly breaking up, she said, "Oh, I'm nothing to you," and he said, "You remember the second subject of the first movement of the Sixth Symphony?" She said, "Yes, I copied it out for you, remember?" He said, "Well, that's you." And it is the most beautiful thing he ever wrote — but it's cut across by a brutal military march. He always associated the threat to love, or the death of love, with a military band. Because, when he was a kid, they lived next door to a barracks. His father was very brutal — beating up his mother and seducing the maidservant — and, always, a military band was playing whenever this was going on.

How do you know that?

Russell: Well, he said so.

How much of the material is purely subjective — as with Tchaikovsky in ***The Music Lovers****, things which you simply feel to be true?*

Russell: What I've done in **Mahler** is project things into the future a bit, because he was always going on about how no one ever really dies. In a way, that's the theme, also, of **Tommy** — a sort of continuing life cycle, spring-summer-autumn-winter, that eternal renewal thing. He was very taken up with Nietzche's philosophy on that. The fact that he was terrified of death — he kept putting off his Ninth Symphony because he knew that Beethoven had died after his Ninth, and Bruckner died after his Ninth — he cheated, and called his Ninth Symphony, "Song of the Earth." But eventually he wrote number nine, which is all about death, and then of course he never finished. So he was right; he did go.

He had a thing about changing his religion, and being afraid of being buried, and then being afraid of being cremated and so forth. He changed his religion just because he had to in Germany at that

Too much too little

Warner Brothers launched Ken Russell's **Lisztomania** in grand style, at its New York premiere in October. Media people, from all over the United States and Canada, were junketed in to the metropolis for three days; at the theaters, for ordinary people, there were t-shirts, lapel buttons, visor caps, oriental fans and balloons. Things looked good for Russell's newest biopus extraordinaire, that is, until the movie actually opened. Opening weekend crowds were unusually, embarassingly small; the reviews by daily critics were restrained but mostly disapproving. On the third day (the other two were devoted to **Dog Day Afternoon** and **Let's Do It Again**) of the press junket, **Lisztomania** co-star Fiona Lewis (she plays a countess) arrived for interviews. But it already seemed too late; many of the press people, flown in at Warner Brothers' publicity-conscious expense, showed their dislike for the Russell film by simply vanishing.

The absent ones missed her most telling anecdote. The actress described the shooting of what will certainly become the film's most celebrated sequence, an orgiastic fantasy with Liszt and a giant, scale-model, amazingly-lifelike phallus. While the great composer is circled by a bevy of gyrating nymphs, his over-size penis is (no pun intended) "beheaded" at the guillotine. Russell, according to Fiona Lewis, shot the scene with his critics in mind, jumping up and down excitedly, exclaiming, "They'll hate this part. I know they will!" She added: "He seemed to take it with glee."

Lisztomania is Russell at his utmost, pandering to his own overblown image, vulgar, bombastic, pretentious, gaudy, flamboyant, religious, ridiculous, raunchy, exciting, satiric, symbolic, meaningless, absorbing, exhilarating, trite, dull. I don't see how he can go beyond it without mooning during the opening credits, although anything is possible. His Franz Liszt is somewhat like his **Tommy**, a teen idol of sorts, trapped in a nightmarish world of unrequited love, and locked in a bitchy rivalry with a sinister musician named Wagner; the movie has the director's famous, shiny, strobic, rainbow aesthetic, and if nothing else it proves that Russell is a master at stretching an estimated $1.5 million budget beyond the pale. The bizarre Russell touch is evident throughout, in rooms decorated with piano keys, with Liszt in a perpetual loincloth, with SRO concert halls filled with lasses in sunny, yellow bonnets. There is a snazzy, little scene in a crowded musician's joint, with Mendelssohn announcing, "Music; schmusic, it's a living," and Rossini offering a tray of chicken to Berlioz, with the advice, "Eat or you'll get sick!" Some of this cleverness works; much of it does not.

Roger Daltrey, who reprises from Russell's **Tommy**, is a dismal Liszt, and he does little but stare blankly; Paul Nicholas plays the Nazi-Christ Figure, Wagner; and Ringo Starr cameos as, what else, the Pope. The visual effects (photography by Peter Suschitzky) are excellent; but the music (Rick Wakeman provides a mediocre rock score) is not on the level of **Tommy**. The movie can be watched as the technical gymnastic of a snotty eccentric, certainly, or as pure fantasy (Russell has strayed far from his reverent BBC documentaries on the lives of classical composers), as it was surely intended. But the director stacks symbol upon symbol, noise upon noise and gimmick upon gimmick, and comes up with an empty gesture. It is not that **Lisztomania** is too much, really, but that it is too little, and vacuous.

Fiona Lewis reported: "I think his fantasy trip is now out of his system, and I think his next film, about Rudolph Valentino, will be relatively straight." Which, on Russell's terms, could mean anything.

Patrick McGilligan

"When it actually came to doing the film, I had obviously been thinking about Mahler for twenty years. I just wrote it down, you know?"

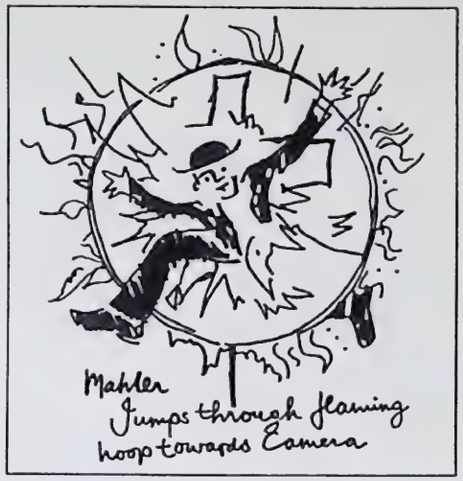
point, just to get on; the Jews weren't popular even in those days, in 1900. I thought, what if he'd just been a few years later, and his music was banned by Hitler? I thought, I wonder what would have happened if he'd tried to change his religion then? It wouldn't have made any difference, he'd have gone to the ovens anyway. So I mixed all that, projected all those thoughts about his life, and what happened to musicians like him in the regime that followed — which Cosima Wagner was partly responsible for, because Hitler always said, to understand National Socialist Germany, you must read Wagner's philosophy and listen to his music. All those things subconsciously rose to the surface, and I put them in the film.

Is it significant — to your choice of subjects — that the composers you have portrayed biographically, such as Mahler and Tchaikovsky, are beset by neuroses or some personal disorder?

Russell: If they didn't have any neurosis, they wouldn't have written the music. You can't have one without the other. I think most artists have — I wouldn't go as far as to say a neurosis — but they have a different inner life or vision. I've got to like the music. The things that attracted me to Tchaikovsky were the agony of his life that he poured into the Ninth Symphony; I found that very moving, and very revealing. It seemed to tell me more about him, once you're given a clue, than all the biographies you can read put together. Obviously it should, because it's a distillation of his entire experience in 45 minutes, the culmination of his life, a tortured life.

Symphonies, in particular, seem to be the greatest achievement that man's made in assimilating and putting forth remote human emotions and philosophies in an abstract way. They seem self-consciously, as far as I'm concerned anyway, to open up paths of .perception that are denied one in literature. You can read very amazing philosophical books and so forth but, to me, symphonies are almost like inner space science fiction music. It's a trip in the mind. I've never taken drugs, but I imagine it's the same sort of thing; you're in control in a sense,when you're listening to music and, given a clue, you can go on this amazing journey, as it were.

Mahler was interested in things which interest me — like the Third Symphony is an exploration of God through nature. Every moment is what the rocks tell me, what the flowers tell me, what the animals in the forest tell me, what loves me. He also said it could be what God tells me. I'm interested to know what those things did tell him, and so that is why I find his



Storyboard sketch for a scene in ***Mahler.***

symphonies fascinating. I also find the Sixth Symphony fascinating — which he said was autobiographical. It has the most beautiful theme he ever wrote, but he didn't let on until quite late in life — in fact, he was estranged from his wife by then, and only mentioned it in desperation — that this theme represented her. If he had told her a few years before, it might have helped matters; but he didn't.

His music seems to throw a lot of psychological insight into his own personality, and what moved, affected and shaped his life. I was very fortunate because, more so than any other composer, he said what his things hinted, what they were about. It's like this voyage of discovery combined with this sort of detective work to try and solve the mystery behind him. Which one can't do but, at least by exploring, you can throw some light on him.

What is the situation with distribution, in America, of ***Mahler****?*

Russell: It's been finished over a year, and we did have an American distributor, but ...

Ely Landau of the American Film Theatre?

Russell: That's the chap, yes. Negotiations went on and eventually came to a close. He came to England and said, "Well, there are just one or two things we'd like to clip out." I said, "Tell me the first one." He said, "There's this conversion of Mahler on the mountain that's in rather bad taste; that would have to go." That's my favorite sequence, it lasts ten minutes and it's the highlight of the movie. So I said, "Don't bother to tell me the rest," and showed him the door.

How does it feel, then, to have the full backing and spiritual support of a major company like Columbia for ***Tommy****?*

Russell: Somebody who shall be nameless — some high executive — saw the film and said, "Great, there's only two criticisms I have to make." I said, "Well, what are they?" He said, "There are two yawns in the picture. People in the film actually yawn, and nobody yawns in a Columbia picture."

He also said, "Oh, those black bits you've got on the screen with a few ar-

Ken Russell at work.

"What I like about visual things is that before you get time for the defences to go up, it's hit the brain ... there's no time for any sort of wall."

rows, I appreciate the significance of it but I just wonder about those." I said, "Oh well, of course, that's just a story board for how we're going to shoot an optical sequence." I mean, all it was was some black paper with white chalk marks with an arrow pointing to a pinball, to show the direction it was to go. A child would know it was just a guide for the people who were going to shoot the thing, to accompany the music. But *they* thought it was a part of the finished product. I don't think they know too much about movies.

Why were you attracted to ***Tommy****?*

Russell: Again, it's very religious. It's a pilgrim's progress, it's about somebody trying to find answers, it's about masses trying to find answers and the fact that answers are often not to be found in externals, but mostly in internals. It's all to do with "put on your eyeshades, put in your earplugs, put a cork in your mouth, turn inward and play pinball." I mean, that's a very good metaphor, it seems to me. Who wants to do that? Nobody. Very few people, anyway. It's about instant enlightenment, instant answers, an obvious solution and it's about the exploitation of religion. One of the first straight documentaries I ever made — just cut to music, actually — was about Lourdes. It was the first time I learned to cut films to music, although I sure didn't cut it myself. It was about Lourdes — the pilgrims, the processions, the exploitation; and **Tommy** is about the exploitation of religious ideals, as much as anything else — the way, in this case, that people reject them. Chuck out the baby with the bath water.

Did you hear the Who album when it was originally released?

Russell: Yes, it was played to me by some friends of mine who — they knew my interest in visuals with music — said, "You must do this." I played side one and I thought it was rubbish. I couldn't follow the story; I couldn't make head nor tail of it. I was unfamiliar with music of that kind, anyway. Then, a few years later, an album came out which was very badly orchestrated — it had nothing to do with the Who. I hated it, insofar as it was a big symphony orchestra, all bloated, and it sounded more like Leonard Bernstein — at least, though, the numbers were more dramatic. One could follow the story since there was a bit of a synopsis; it became much clearer.

About that time, I was approached by some people to see if I would be interested in doing a script; I met Townshend. Pete showed me all the scripts that had been submitted to him by various promoters over the years, and they were all, without exception, totally horrific. Mostly Julie Andrews-type scripts; some were amazingly awful, in that sense. One was set on a pinball table, for some extraordinary reason. They varied from that sort of pseudo-science fiction thing to the Julie Andrews musicals. All the scripts were rubbish; they didn't seem to be what he seemed to be about.

I assimilated everything he'd written about the pieces. I wrote a little treatment in which I put forth the ideas I thought he was on about, and then we discussed that, made slight changes — very slight — and then I wrote the script, pointing out various gaps in the storyline which I thought needed opening out and amplifying and explaining, which he hadn't bothered about in the original.

What changes did you make in Townshend's original score?

Russell: We both said from the start we didn't want to use any dialogue. So that was that. I wrote the script with the songs where the dialogue would be and the action written against the verse of the songs.

How did you actually shoot the movie without dialogue?

Russell: We wrote the script and, naturally, I knew the words for the songs. Occasionally, I said, "Could you alter one line here or so?" — you know, to give a bit of emphasis to something — and he'd say, "Yeah." He'd written the new songs, given me the words for them and so, basically, I had a whole lot of songs.

I told him where I thought there should be instrumental things to accompany visuals to link those sequences, and then we simply went into a recording studio for three months and recorded it, totally out of context. This person would be available, and then Ann-Margret would be flown over and she'd do all her songs. Because we had worked out exactly the way the story would go, I could say to Ann-Margret, "Sing this song yawning, because you are going to be bored with Tommy's problem by this time. Years have gone by or you've just had a breakdown; put this marshmallow in your mouth and sing with that. Or put a cigarette in your mouth and sing yawning because you're not interested." So it went on like that. Everyone we talked to we filled in, and if they hadn't seen the script, at least they knew where they stood in context to that whole particular sequence.

So we had it dramatically sorted out before we actually got onto the floor; then it was just a question of doing it to playback, and knowing you had to get a certain sequence over by x number of lines. Which was a very good exercise, insofar as it made one very concise. You had to make sure the visuals didn't over-run the music and it stretched your imagination. The impact was greater because it was much more concise and stated in a much shorter time than one would naturally do.

Did you have any trouble working with the musicians?

Russell: Only insofar as I was naive enough at the very start, when we were doing the pre-recording to suggest to Pete Townshend, "When're we starting? Eight o'clock in the morning, nine?" He said, "I think you should start it a little later." I said, "Ten o'clock?" He said, "Just a wee bit later than that." I said, "Two o'clock in the afternoon then." He said, "Well, if you think so, all right." Of course, I was in the studio at two o'clock and he came in about five o'clock, knowing nobody would be there, and then we sat there until midnight. Then they started coming in. Well, that's when I got the message that they work a different time scale to filmmakers. Once I got over that hurdle, it was okay.

The last I heard, you had no interest in rock music.

Russell: I still haven't. What I've heard doesn't do anything for me. But the fact that **Tommy** is written in a rock idiom is, so far as I'm concerned, beside the point. It's a good piece of music and it's a very good opera. I don't care what style it's in. I mean, in the Twenties, Kurt Weill could write symphonies that sounded like Richard Strauss, but when he came to do his operas they sounded like German jazz. He was just a good musician. Well, Townshend's been brought up with a rock background and has got a rock following. But **Tommy**, at least the film version, will reach those people, and I hope will reach millions more people, who've never dreamed of hearing rock.

How did you cast the film if you are so unfamiliar with rock music?

Russell: A lot of names were suggested, as I am not familiar with rock at all. A lot of the people I had never heard of at all. Somebody would be suggested, and one would hear their records and so forth.

I'd never heard of Eric Clapton or Elton John, for example, but I thought any performer who's any good at all could play the cameos if it's up their street, as it were.

I did know we needed good actors to play Tommy (Roger Daltrey), his father (Robert Powell), his stepfather (Oliver Reed) and his mother (Ann-Margret). The mother had to do more singing than anyone else and most people in the film put together. Someone said, "Well, what about Ann-Margret?" I remembered her from the old days of **Bye, Bye Birdie** and the Elvis things and I said, "Look, she can't act, can she?" They said, "Go and

see **Carnal Knowledge**." So I saw it and thought, "Couldn't be better, really super." And she is, I think, very good in the film.

What kind of an effect do you hope to have, with the kind of extravagant visuals you employ in ***Tommy*** *and your other films?*

Russell: An effect that is going to illuminate music, if we are talking about music — or an effect that is going to illuminate the idea in the fastest possible way, in the most dramatic way and in the most emotional way — with the most impact, because I like instant exposure to an idea. It doesn't give one time to put up the metal grille of censorship in the mind. The thing about reading — the thing about Aldous Huxley's *The Devils* — is that you can censor it as you go along. By the time, you've translated the words into pictures — because one's brain obviously can't be open to horror all the time — there's this censorship thing that seems to operate, and it's transmitted into an acceptable picture. Whereas the thing I like about visual things is that before you get time for the defences to go up, it's hit the brain; and you have to react simply as you would. There's no time for any sort of wall to go up, and I think that's what I like about it.

Is your wife, [*costume designer*] *Shirley Russell, an influence on your filmmaking?*

Russell: Yes. She always reads the script, for example. The first script I wrote for **Lisztomania**, she said, "Rubbish!" and threw it away. I thought it was a masterpiece but then I started script number two immediately, because I have to work with her and live with her and she's usually right. She said, "Um, getting better." The one I finally ended up with, she said, "Huh, it's alright," so that's good.

We also talk about what effect we want to get over and the best way to achieve it visually. Because we met at the same art school — although she is a dress designer, she actually went through the painting and sculpting bit — I discuss things with her. For instance, there is a sequence with Liszt in hell which I discussed with her, and for which she is going to do the storyboard. Some of Liszt's music sounds like old silent film piano music, rather hearts and flowers, and we're doing a sort of Charlie Chaplin **Gold Rush** sequence. That's just to one of his piano pieces and I've worked closely together with her on that; she suggests things, we mark it in. Yes, she's very crucial to the construction of the whole thing, to the look and feel of the whole thing.

I wanted to ask you about this week of interviews that you've given in New York City. The press has always been fairly hostile to you; what sorts of questions have you been asked, and what is your impression of their attitude?

Russell: Well, they always start off with, "Now, you're called a controversial director..." You can fit in the rest from there, I think.

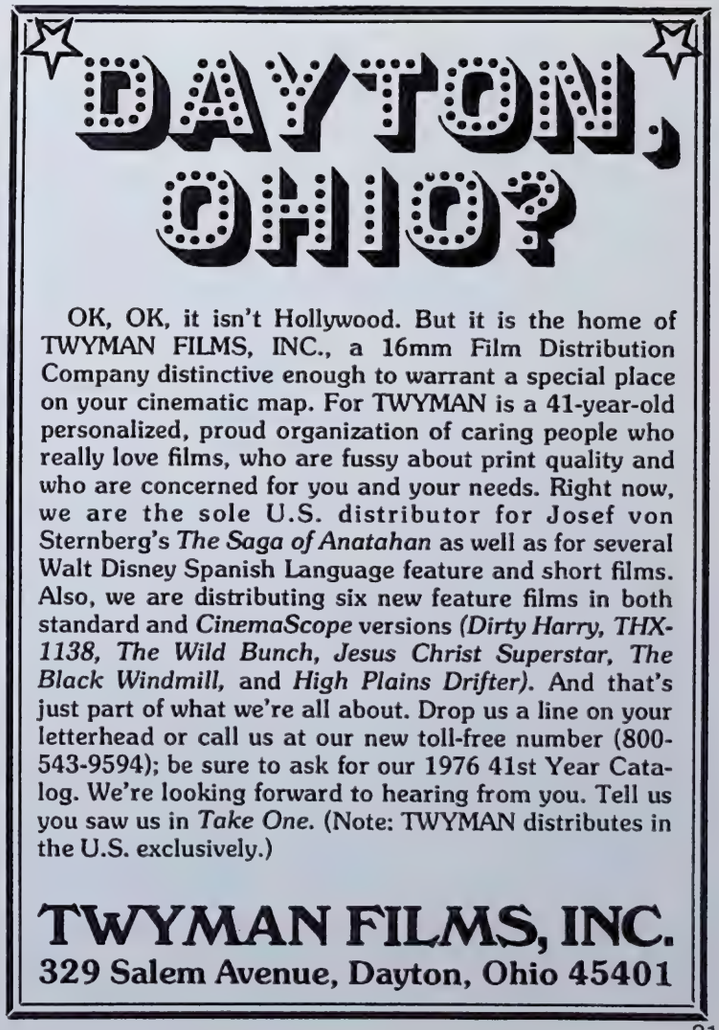
A lot of people, when they met me, I was told they were going to be cowering in corners and absolutely terrified of facing up to the ogre who was going to come crashing in and probably pummel them to pulp. Most of them said, "Gosh, you look like Santa Claus." I've got this beard now, and a very benign expression, and I usually have a coat slung over my back, which they think is a sack full of presents. They see the dandruff on my shoulders and they think it's snow. Santa Claus is the new image, but they'll probably still be saying, "I survived the ogre."

I understand you had a bit of trouble on the "Tomorrow" show with host Tom Snyder.

Russell: Oh, if I'd have known what he was up to, how boring and dead, what a piece of plastic surgery was sitting in the chair, well, I either wouldn't have done it or I would have approached it in a different way. That was the first thing he said: "Now you're controversial..." He'd never seen any of my films — he had no intention of seeing them, didn't really want to. As far as he was concerned, I was just somebody sitting in a fur coat, talking. I think he was an idiot.

Interview edited from conversation with Ken Russell and Janet Maslin (by telephone), and Ken Russell and Patrick McGilligan (in New York City) in January of 1975, before the release of Tommy.

END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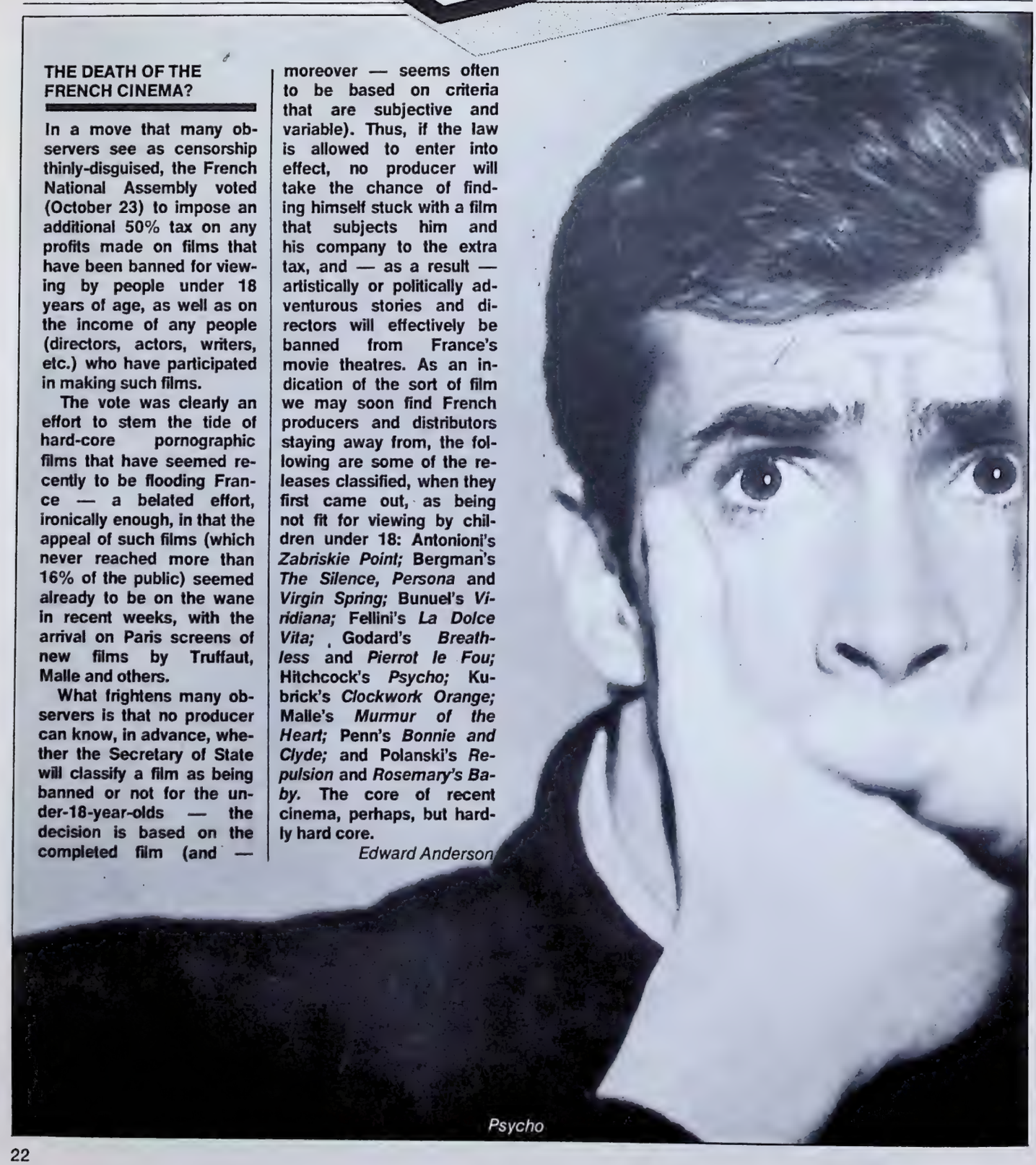
THE DEATH OF THE FRENCH CINEMA?

In a move that many observers see as censorship thinly-disguised, the French National Assembly voted (October 23) to impose an additional 50% tax on any profits made on films that have been banned for viewing by people under 18 years of age, as well as on the income of any people (directors, actors, writers, etc.) who have participated in making such films.

The vote was clearly an effort to stem the tide of hard-core pornographic films that have seemed recently to be flooding France — a belated effort, ironically enough, in that the appeal of such films (which never reached more than 16% of the public) seemed already to be on the wane in recent weeks, with the arrival on Paris screens of new films by Truffaut, Malle and others.

What frightens many observers is that no producer can know, in advance, whether the Secretary of State will classify a film as being banned or not for the under-18-year-olds — the decision is based on the completed film (and — moreover — seems often to be based on criteria that are subjective and variable). Thus, if the law is allowed to enter into effect, no producer will take the chance of finding himself stuck with a film that subjects him and his company to the extra tax, and — as a result — artistically or politically adventurous stories and directors will effectively be banned from France's movie theatres. As an indication of the sort of film we may soon find French producers and distributors staying away from, the following are some of the releases classified, when they first came out, as being not fit for viewing by children under 18: Antonioni's *Zabriskie Point;* Bergman's *The Silence, Persona* and *Virgin Spring;* Bunuel's *Viridiana;* Fellini's *La Dolce Vita;* Godard's *Breathless* and *Pierrot le Fou;* Hitchcock's *Psycho;* Kubrick's *Clockwork Orange;* Malle's *Murmur of the Heart;* Penn's *Bonnie and Clyde;* and Polanski's *Repulsion* and *Rosemary's Baby.* The core of recent cinema, perhaps, but hardly hard core.

Edward Anderson



Psycho

Canned Ham

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Mel Brooks gives the old borsch a belt. Directed and written by Mel Brooks. With Ron Moody, Dom DeLuise and Frank Langella.

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Peter Sellers pollinates among the flower children. Directed by Hy Averback. With Jo Van Fleet and Leigh Taylor-Young

MAKE MINE MINK
Terry Thomas helps little ol' ladies steal little ol' furs for charity. Directed by Robert Asher. With Athene Seyler, Hattie Jacques and Billie Whitelaw.

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No. 10 (June 1968): Alfred Hitchcock talking about some of the special effects used in *The Birds*; a report on Godard's visit to Hollywood (discussions with Sam Fuller, King Vidor, Roger Corman, and Peter Bogdanovich). **Sold out.**

No. 11 (Sept. 1968): Analyses of film violence by Fredric Wertham and Paul Krassner; a selection from the letters of Groucho Marx; an interview with the creator of the special effects for *2001*; reviews of *Weekend, The Green Berets*, and *The Bride Wore Black*. **$4.50**

No. 12 (Nov. 1968): A survey of the Cuban cinema (biographies and filmographies of four major directors); some comments by Roger Corman; Mordecai Richler on writing for the movies; and a review of *Bullitt*. **Sold out.**

Volume 2

No. 1 (published March 1969): Interviews with everyone involved in *Alice's Restaurant* (including Penn, Arlo, and Alice); an interview with Ingmar Bergman; a review of Godard's *One Plus One*. **Sold out**

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Lean, the Cannes Film Festival, Woody Allen, monsters, Joseph Losey, porn films, Elvis Presley, the early National Film Board, James Cagney, Pasolini, Bruce Lee, Ray Harryhausen, editing films for tv, Fassbinder, Robert Aldrich, René Clair, Roberto Rossellini, and Jane Fonda.

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Many of the articles, interviews, columns and reviews that were first published in the pages of *Take One* have gone on to be re-printed in books and magazines around the world, but the easiest place to find the cream of film writing has always been right here — in our pages.

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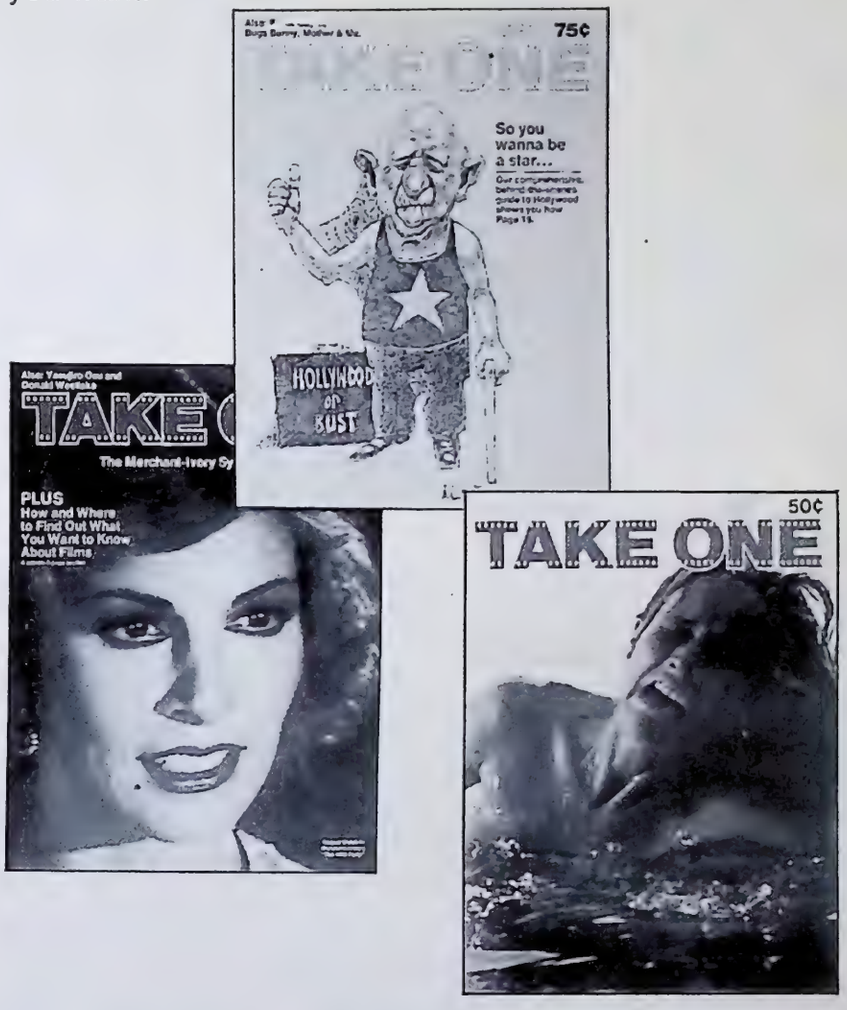

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Misc.

Fassbinder:
A Year (or so) in the Life

A year ago *Take One* (Vol. 4 No. 6) ran an article on the young German filmmaker Rainer Werner Fassbinder in which the author, young Danish filmmaker Christian Braad Thomsen, wrote "Although Fassbinder is only 28 years old, he has already — with his 23 full-length feature films — made twice as many films as the aging master Robert Bresson." Bresson's **Lancelot du Lac** had shared the 1974 Cannes Critics' Prize with Fassbinder's **Ali/Fear Eats the Soul**. **Lancelot** was Bresson's fifth film in a decade; **Ali** was one of four films Fassbinder was to complete in 1974.

Ali was, in fact, Fassbinder's second film of the year. By the time it arrived in Cannes in May, a third — made for television and lacking only its title **(Martha)** — was already in the can. The first of the 1974 crop, his black-and-white, 2½-hour adaptation of Fontaine's nineteenth-century classic, *Effi Briest*, was premiered at the Berlin Film Festival on June 28 in the presence of the director and his ubiquitous collaborators. Three days later they were all out on the Munich streets shooting their next feature, **Faustrecht der Freiheit (Might Makes Right)** from another script by Fassbinder. It's his most Sirkian effort to date, with Fassbinder himself in the lead, though its hard to tell whether he's Rock Hudson or Jane Wyman. He plays a homosexual fairground performer, Fox: The Talking Head, who gets rich on a lottery ticket and is exploited back to poverty and death by his smart new friends.

Shortly after completing that film, Fassbinder and friends moved to Frankfurt, shifting their anti-theatre troupe to the Theater am Turm because they felt the Munich public were beginning to take their shock-tactics for granted.

May of this year saw Fassbinder back on the beach at Cannes in his black leather jacket and commando boots. (He arrived without luggage and with his male co-star, stage director Peter Chatel, and even though they were on the VIP list their hotel refused to show them to their room unless they paid in advance.) **Might Makes Right** got an enthusiastic reception but clearly upset both the French critics, who could find no theoretical handle to hang it on, and Gay Lib dogmatists, who disliked the idea of showing gays exploiting each other. In vain Fassbinder patiently explained that his film was about exploitation rather than homosexuality. With five of his boys camping it up on the beach, just who was he trying to fool? The French seemed momentarily re-assured when he made a possessive reference to his wife, actress Ingrid Caven, but waxed indignant when he deflected a question about the metaphysical significance of Morocco in his films by confessing to a passion for Moroccan men.

Fassbinder left Cannes without either luggage or prizes and, on returning to Germany, led his disciples out of the Frankfurt wilderness, causing some consternation by announcing to *Der Spiegel* that he'd decided to become a French director. (He doesn't speak French and had already begun looking for a new theatre in Munich.) But that was nothing compared to the disturbance he was to cause a few weeks later at this year's Berlin Film Festival.

The main Berlin Festival was (as usual) a drag, consisting chiefly of films that had probably been rejected for any of the official events at Cannes. To be fair, the winner of the Golden Bear, Marta Meszaros's **The Adoption**, was a fine film. It also (coincidentally?) was the ideal choice politically for International Women's Year and the first year the East Europeans had attended the festival. Otherwise the only film of interest was a film by Jiri Menzel about (honest) a boy and his tractor. A slick, lyrical, skillfully-made homage to dam construction, it has absolutely nothing to identify it as a Menzel film. At least he's alive and working.

If there wasn't much action at the main festival, there was lots at the Internationales Forum des Jungen Films and it wasn't all on the screen. The Forum is held in conjunction with the Berlin Festival but it's organized separately and the two are studies in contrasts. The main festival shuns political films; with the exception of a few experimental films the Forum shows nothing but political films. The Forum's audience is highly political and on at least three occasions disrupted screenings to hold political discussions.

In the midst of all this, Fassbinder and friends arrived from Munich with **Mother Kuster's Trip to Heaven**, a film which the main festival had turned down on grounds of quality, though the word was out that it was too political for them. It may also have been too political for the Forum: though it was shown in the same theatre, it was officially sponsored by the Friends of the German Cinémathèque (who happen to be pretty much the same people who run the Young Forum).

Mother Kuster's Trip to Heaven stars Briggitte Mira (from **Ali**) as the widow of a mild-mannered factory-worker who throws himself into his machine after murdering the foreman. Her grief is exploited by the newspapers, her family, the Communist Party and finally by an anarchist group based, obviously, on the Baader-Meinhof group. The audience seemed rather ambivalent about the treatment of the official Communist Party but the film's presentation of the anarchist gang elicited catcalls, hisses and attempts to stop the screening.

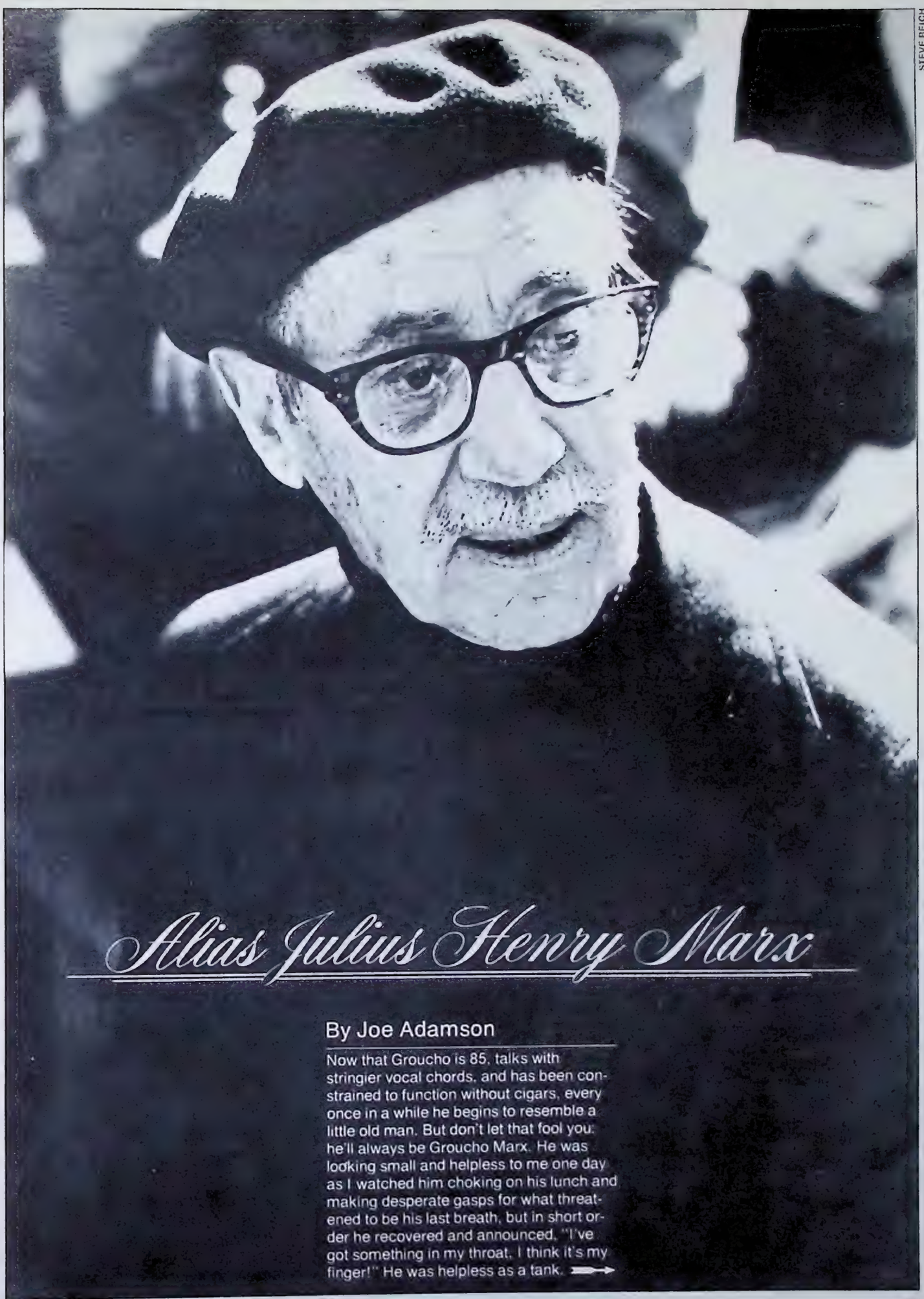
Later Fassbinder, Ingrid Caven and Kurt Robb took the stage and answered (often frivolously) hostile and abusive questions from the audience. Fassbinder was accused of being not only a shitty filmmaker but also of being a government agent and a member of the "homosexual sub-culture".

That night, a Monday, he signed the lease on a potential theatre in Munich. On Tuesday, yet another new Fassbinder film, **Angst von der Angst (Afraid of Fear)**, was shown on television. Its story about a young middle-class mother suffering a pre-natal depressive breakdown contains all the staples of a naturalistic drama, but the treatment owed more to Douglas Sirk than to Ken Loach, with photography in the baroque, ominous style of **Martha**.

The telecast was on the closing night of the Berlin Film Festival and it was Fassbinder's 25th film, in honour of the Festival's 25th anniversary. Two days later, Fassbinder and his merry band left for a two-week holiday in Greece, where they wrote a new screenplay as well as the play which was to open their new theatre on August 1.

In September, Fassbinder starred in a new film by Daniel Schmidt and in October began shooting his own film. If he matches last year's pace he'll complete his 30th film sometime before he turns 30.

Jan Dawson & Joe Medjuck



STEVE REICH

Alias Julius Henry Marx

By Joe Adamson

Now that Groucho is 85, talks with stringier vocal chords, and has been constrained to function without cigars, every once in a while he begins to resemble a little old man. But don't let that fool you: he'll always be Groucho Marx. He was looking small and helpless to me one day as I watched him choking on his lunch and making desperate gasps for what threatened to be his last breath, but in short order he recovered and announced, "I've got something in my throat, I think it's my finger!" He was helpless as a tank.

J. H. Marx at 14 ...

He was born Julius Henry Marx, so he went through his whole life calling himself Groucho. Born into a family of poker fans, he refused to find card playing anything but a borē. Blessed with two pool-cue, pinochle, and parlor-trick experts for big brothers, he decided he wasn't interested in that. Surrounded by illiterates, he excelled at all things literary and turned into a first-class student. By nature a serious and reflective person, he went on to become one of the world's greatest comedians. Since it went against his Libra grain to be anything but obeisantly polite and considerate, he became adept at the rude and slashing insult.

The mind of Groucho Marx was always working, but it just wasn't about to be told what it should be working at. All you had to do was pressure him into doing something, and you could be certain his nimble brain would conjure up an overriding compulsion for its opposite. The greater the encouragement to mingle in a crowd and crack funny jokes, the greater would be his natural inclination to go off in a room by himself, play the guitar, read a book, and worry about something. Usually you couldn't get a good gag out of him until he was encased away in a cathedral and surrounded by obsessionist zealots who were guaranteed not to be amused — like the time he attended a spiritualists' meeting and answered a call for questions to the Great Spirit by standing up and asking, "What's the capital of North Dakota?"

These were the words I penned about Groucho Marx for my book *Groucho, Harpo, Chico, and Sometimes Zeppo*, years before ever meeting him. Now that I have met him, I've decided the words that describe him best are the ones that say words can't describe him. Though he's a master of verbal agility unrivaled since Shaw, his wit has served the paradoxical purpose of proving the futility of words. As Clifton Fadiman said about the entire team, "The Marxes are so defiantly unreasonable that the reasonableness of all things non-Marx suddenly becomes flat, stale, unprofitable — and ridiculous." Groucho's effect on me was profound, but now that I'm equipped to answer the question, "What's Groucho Marx like?", I find that the experience makes any possible answer irrelevant.

"I'll give him the goddamdest interview he ever saw!" Groucho boasted to his secretary Erin Fleming, in a visible attempt to bolster his own ego.

"You see, he has certain questions..." Erin tried to explain.

"He does, eh?" Groucho retorted. "Well, I have certain answers!"

And certain answers he had, no matter what questions I tried to ask.

"Can I show you this?"

"No."

Erin interceded: "Won't you let Joe show you the special edition of his book?"

Groucho reacted to the one word in the sentence you would think would preclude argument. "Joe?" he said. "Is that your relationship with him now, you're calling him Joe?"

Erin stood her ground. "Yes," she said. "First name basis."

Groucho looked genuinely hurt. "Why don't you call *me* Joe, instead of *him*?"

Written interviews with Groucho are adept at giving us lines like "I hate kids" and "Jews make bad waiters," but they don't communicate the bizarre mixture of sarcasm, solemnity, warmth, and pure silliness that makes such a commonplace observation sound funny when he says it (and puts it in comic perspective to boot). The fact that any given set of words has issued from Groucho's mouth makes it a pretty safe bet he has the opposite in mind. No printed page can ever convey the simple human good fellowship Groucho manages to project while doling out barbs too frightful to be endured.

"What is this? Coming in here without a jacket!! Don't you know this is a gentleman's home!" This was the greeting I once got in his Beverly Hills living room on a casual Saturday afternoon. Immediately after the rebuke he turned to me with fun in his eyes and displayed his own apparel. "See? *I'm* wearing a jacket!"

Or: "Keep this brief, will you?" as he said at the start of one interview. "I haven't got all day to spend with a man that I don't even know." Enough to knock any interviewer off balance, but by the time it was through rolling out of his larynx in that deep, sonorous, comforting rumble, touched off with his sardonic clownish overtone, it was impossible to take as anything but an amiable gag.

I tried to be obliging: "You just tell me when you've had enough..."

"I've had enough right now!"

"I've heard it said that..."

"That's a lie, too!" All with the kind of conspiratorial Cheshire grin that implied this nonsense was *surely* what I had in mind when I came here.

An odd way to project fellowship perhaps. But warmer, kinder, and more human than most people's congenital congenialities.

Groucho's victory lies not simply in being awfully funny, or in making a fortune by being awfully funny, but in synthesizing his inner conflicts in a way that comes out sounding awfully funny. His words come at you from one side of his temperament and his meaning from the other.

The result is that discussion over his personal self confuses terms of great endearing with terms of great despair. The writers of their movies talked about him as if they would like to be exasperated but just couldn't make it stick. His children try to describe him as a perfect doting father, but they're never sure whether to believe that one either. Even as host of the *You Bet Your Life* show now being sporadically rerun, he's compassionate enough to shatter the movie image of the heartless sniper, but yanking hard at the reins to avoid looking for a minute like the gladhand quizmaster. Anybody who is so shy he shies away from shyness has got to look awfully brash if he's really going to make those jokes it occurs to him will upset the people he wants to please. Groucho once lost Pabst Blue Ribbon Beer as a sponsor after taking Edward Pabst to a bar and getting him drunk on Miller's High Life.

"In **Duck Soup** there is a scene where Harpo goes to bed with a horse."

"Yes. The horse complained about it, too."

"But after that, he rarely does that kind of salacious humor..."

"You mean the horse?"

I had come to ascertain certain facts of historical import I'd wondered years about, and for which only Groucho could vouch. He had agreed to help as much as he could ("As long as I have on heavy underwear"), periodically reminding me that as far as he was concerned all this stuff passed over the dam forty years ago ("I can hardly remember *you*" — that was the *warmest* thing he said).

"I found a remark of yours, in reference to the vaudeville years with your brothers, that 'We always played to ourselves, never the audience.' Was that really true?"

"No, that's wrong. We always played *with* ourselves."

"I see..."

"We never fought, either. In all the years we were together."

"You must have had *some* disagreements, once in a while."

"Not much. We were very friendly."

"How did you settle things, when you did disagree?"

"We hit each other. I always carried a baseball bat with me."

The moral of the story seemed to be that Marx Brothers don't make good his-

Joa Adamson was the author of "Of Mice and Cats" in our last issue. His books include Groucho, Harpo, Chico, and Sometimes Zeppo *and* Tex Avery: King of Cartoons. *He also co-directed the award-winning film,* ***A Political Cartoon.***

torians. But who, faced with one of the Marx Brothers, would prefer hard and cold facts? I will always remember Groucho Marx as the man who informed me, "There isn't any music in **A Night at the Opera**": as appropriate a thing for Groucho Marx to say as any I can think of.

"Do you remember Grover Jones?"

"Maybe."

"But do you remember anything *about* him?"

"Nothing."

... at 47 ...

Once he claimed, less obvious in his pride than in his bewilderment, "Our pictures are more popular now than they were when we made them. We get a hundred letters a week."

I commented that the same was true of Keaton, Fields, and Laurel & Hardy. Veneration for comedians looks to the average man like a paradox. Veneration for *yesterday's* comedians is romantically valid.

"People have no respect for comedy," he said. "They think it's easy."

The current Marx Brothers rage is not quite a comeback. The Marxes never exactly went *away*. Even in the face of such unfortunate occurrences as Harpo and Chico ceasing to exist (a setback which would have proved *fatal* to any performer before this century), the Marx Brothers have gone marching on. In fact, they made their "comeback" in 1946 with **A Night in Casablanca**, and there were capacity crowds and rave reviews for a picture that wasn't even very good. When **Animal Crackers** was let out of its can in 1974 it proved in spite of arteriosclerotic camera technique, thunderously ponderous plot development, and several unexplained excisions (Universal's "uncut" version featured three of the most obvious cuts in the history of Motion Pictures: characters interrupted themselves with the *middle* of their next line) — that we'll go on finding this kind of madness not only funny but a cure for what ails us just as long as there are ceremonies we don't want to attend, platitudes we don't want to believe, and pretensions we are tired of accepting. Which looks to be forever.

Offscreen, Groucho is a funny man even when he isn't *saying* anything ... his every remark is momentarily accepted as a joke.

"Was Morrie Ryskind on the set when you shot **Animal Crackers**?"

"I don't know. I was the Best Man when Ryskind got married! Including him!"

"Did you feel any uneasiness about dropping Zeppo from the team?"

"You're kidding, aren't you?"

Groucho's comedy persona probably could not have been so brilliantly maintained over a 65-year career if it weren't organically related to his interior self. Offscreen, Groucho is a funny man even when he isn't *saying* anything: his quizzical half-smile, his curious eyes, his angular poses of tentative rest, all threaten imminent comic explosions, which is part of why his every remark is momentarily accepted as a joke. The audience at the 1974 Academy Award ceremony found itself in the familiar situation of laughing at the man and not the remark when Groucho opened his mouth and said, "I want to thank all the Academy members who voted..." It *sounded* like it was funny.

His comic "delivery" is so rich in overtones that it takes a good 35mm theatrical print and a clear, full-range sound system to deliver it all. (That was the glory of the **Animal Crackers** reissue; Groucho is funny in 16mm, but half the subtleties are gone.) Groucho impersonations are all nasality and sarcasm: Groucho himself is the only comedian there is who can make the most acid remark sound heart-breakingly corrosive and still manage to convey the illusion this is all a Grand Hoo-Hah. People recite the lines, but it's *him* they remember. As Morrie Ryskind, one of **Animal Crackers'** writers, pointed out, "If *I* got up there and said all those lines, nobody'd laugh." And yet the delivery itself is not so much a professional accomplishment as a concentrated version of the tone of voice he uses to ask when lunch will be ready. Groucho answering interview questions, Groucho basking in the company of his grandchildren, Groucho trading banter with Erin Fleming, are every bit as much Groucho Marx as the madman who appears nightly on the screen.

"I heard that when you took **A Night at the Opera** on a road-show tour before

... at 61 and at 83: he'll always be Groucho. "People think it's easy."

filming it, the first performances were disastrous."

"In the first performance I turned to Margaret Dumont and I said, 'Well, Tits, how do you like the show?' I meant to say 'Toots.' That got a laugh for about five minutes."

"Did you and Harpo and Chico really lock yourselves in Margaret Dumont's compartment on that tour and strip yourselves?"

"She screamed so loud, you couldn't hear the train whistle."

Once I started *looking* for the jokes, he turned defiantly to straight answers, as if to say, "Don't expect jokes from me, I'm Groucho Marx!"

For instance, his "understudy" in the stage production of **Cocoanuts**: "He was supposed to sit in the audience and jot down every line that I said. And I kept switching the dialogue on him. If a joke didn't get a laugh, I'd try it another way. Put in a different joke. He couldn't keep track of this. He finally went crazy."

Or the filming of **Cocoanuts**, when producers protested his grease paint moustache: "We got fifty people to sit in the audience. And we played the scene with the painted moustache. And they laughed just the same as they did when I wore a real moustache. So after that the producers didn't bother us any more."

And I could never know enough about **Humorisk**, the sole silent Marx Brothers movie, made in 1921. Groucho was a great boost in my quest to never know enough.

"Do you remember who directed it?"

"There was nothing to direct. We only made two reels, over in Fort Lee. We were playing at the Palace Theater at the time, and we used to run over to the studio to do the film. We did two reels which didn't make any sense. Just trying to be funny and that's all. It disappeared. I don't know who has it." The rumor is that Al Posen, one of the backers, left it on a subway seat, and consigned it to an oblivion no one felt was unjustified.

Today it would be a great historical curiosity, but aside from that, who needs a silent Marx Brothers movie? 1929, the year of **Cocoanuts**, the first Marx Brothers Talkie, may someday be known as the Beginning of Recorded History. Before that, there were only words and pictures. Suddenly, in 1929, there was Life. In a can. In all its contradictions and ambivalences. Ready to be unleashed upon an unsuspecting world in the 1970s. That such a miracle allows Groucho at the age of 85 to receive laughter and applause for his efforts at the age of 39 is a source of unending pleasure to his performer's ego. That it will permit him to be an object of pleasure and veneration to generations yet unborn is something he'd prefer not to think about.

"Do you remember anything about Robert Florey, who directed **Cocoanuts?**"

"Florey? Directed **Cocoanuts?**"

"He was a Frenchman."

"Oh, *him*. He didn't know what we were talking about. It was a very shrewd move, getting a foreigner who didn't speak English to direct the picture."

"I'm told he was somebody who just didn't find your kind of humor funny."

"That's why Paramount put him in charge of the picture!"

"Joe Santley shares the directing credit with Florey; do you remember what his contribution was?"

"Well, Florey spoke his French, and Santley explained it in English."

Walking into the Academy Awards ceremony to watch Groucho receive his Oscar, I was greeted by a sight that I still find hard to believe: the sentence "I suspect that many people who stand up here on this occasion don't say what they really mean," just sitting on a freshly-made cue card waiting for some person to stand up there and say it.

By stratagems such as this, Hollywood has made the Word a thing of the past. While it was making the Persona the thing of the future.

"Groucho!" said Erin Fleming, dashing in from outside with an excitement that seemed to me unwarranted. "The pool man wants to see your Oscar!"

Groucho looked seriously outraged. "I'd have to take off all of my clothes!"

Now, who could get exasperated with a guy like that? Here I had come from miles away to find out the truth about his days in the movies, and here he was offering me a truth I wasn't quite ready for.

Groucho is now working on another book, which he plans to call *Groucho Marx and Other Short Stories*. He won't rest until he proves himself a writer, until he makes his bid to take a place beside James Thurber, George Kaufman, and other of his literary idols. From what I've heard of it (it ends with a Backword, which goes off on an insane tangent about Montezuma), it is exactly as funny as his other books — no more and no less. We'll all buy it, the birds of a feather who flocked to **Animal Crackers**, but Groucho on paper is nothing more than a memo of what happens when we see Groucho on film. Thurber and Kaufman are ghosts, like Byron and Marlowe. Their words will live forever, but they are quite dead. We'll never be able to accept Groucho strictly as a writer. But his impression is indelibly etched on our century regardless. And there's nothing dead about Groucho, or Harpo, or Chico, ever.

"I've given you more misinformation than you could possibly handle," he told me as he showed me to the front door. It was all a joke, and yet the fact that he would make a joke at just that moment made the statement look true. For a business where meaning what you say isn't so important, and a world where saying what you mean isn't so easy, it was the perfect topper.

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Bringing Up the Baby With the Movie Camera

Film is where the action is today in academia.

First Conference on "Film and the University"

Film study in American universities has come of age, and more than 200 film scholars, teachers, and critics met this past summer at New York's City University to mark this rite of passage and to consolidate their newly-won position on the academic field of honor. Despite very limited publicity the first conference on "Film and the University" was sold out the morning it opened and heralded by a *New York Times* report that was only partially condescending. ("Should a Hollywood comedy be given the same academic scrutiny and respect accorded an ancient play by Plautus?" teased the lead.) Indeed, the whole tone of the four-day conference seemed to suggest that film is where the action is today in academia. It wasn't too long ago that the announcement that one taught film was met, mainly, by quizzical smirks. "Film?" they'd say, "you mean *movies*?"

But all that is past now. After floundering around for a decade or so in the university marketplace, film study has finally picked up momentum. It was aided, as the conference showed explicitly, by a marriage of convenience with the most alluring new intellectual fashion since post-war existentialism: Semiotics. Auteurism, the most influential theory of film throughout the fifties and sixties, had never held much attraction for established academics in allied humanistic studies like literature. They could never understand why film people should make high theory out of an axiom that literary critics took for granted. Auteurism was a set of ideas strictly limited to film. But Semiology — that's quite different. Semiology was born outside the limits of film study; its applications to literature and other humanistic studies are attractive and intriguing. And now that it has become so closely allied with film study it has brought a certain cachet to the people who teach movies. So film has become a hot topic in academia, and this past July at CUNY Graduate Center it was enjoying its new-found intellectual respectability.

But there are those members of the film study family who aren't happy with the marriage. Before the conference was four hours old this latent family quarrel — between the new scientific semiologists and the old-fashioned humanists — had surfaced. The conference was marked by a running argument between the two factions. The organizers of the week's program — Marshall Cohen, Professor of Philosophy at CUNY and Gerald Mast, Professor of English — had set up a schedule of lectures and panels that seemed unobjectionable enough — a nice balance between theory and practice; one day devoted to the general subject of "Film as an Object of University Study;" the second composed of investigations into "Film Scholarship" and "Film Institutions". The third day shifted the focus from theory to practice with discussions of two films — **Bringing Up Baby** and **The Man With the Movie Camera** (the first for the humanists, the second for the semiologists?). The fourth day the conference returned to theory, climaxing with a day-long investigation of "Film Language."

But the only topic, it seemed, that any of the 200 participants and 25 panelists really wanted to discuss was the current relationship between Semiotics and film study. The result was a fascinating four-day experience in academic logic and folkways that had some real historical significance — but not necessarily in the way you might think. Semiologists might yet take over burgeoning university film departments, squeezing out the "old-fashioned" humanists, but that's not the point. The differentiation between the two approaches is specious, as I hope will become clear, and — as any good semiological or Structuralist critic would understand — what is really significant in this battle is not the "surface structure" — the professional argument between one faction and another — but the "deep structure" which, I think, is a psychological bind that is just as much a problem for English teachers and Philosophy teachers (and, who knows? for Gym teachers) as it is for people who teach film. It was these psychological roots that fed the very real passion of the argument.

Before we get into an analysis of that "deep structure" of professional psychology, a few words about the general political landscape of film study. Despite the geometric progression in the number of film courses offered at North American colleges and universities in recent years, film is still pretty much an academic hobo. It doesn't usually have a home of its own in the academic structure, finding temporary lodgings, depending on the institution, in Philosophy departments, English departments, Fine Arts, Speech and Drama, Sociology, or Foreign Language departments. It's clear why this is so: film study simply came along after the geography of modern academia had been sanctified by custom and the clout of professional organizations. It's also evident that this won't be true for very much longer. Film teachers come to their subject from, for example, Literature because they're frightened of the boring prospect of writing yet another paper on Percy Bysshe Shelley, because they're looking for a speciality that will give them a certain amount of political clout in the department (film courses are very popular), or simply because they love film. But simply teaching the subject isn't enough after awhile. Visions of one's own full-fledged department dance in the head, with its own office, its own secretaries, its own letterhead. The pressure for aggrandizement is strong and it is only a matter of time before isolated film instructors everywhere, backed by a nationwide professional organization on the model of the M.L.A. or A.H.A. (this conference may have been the harbinger of such an organization), begin to carve out their own domains in the academic geography.

Yet film study's status as an academic orphan hasn't been necessarily damaging. In the first place, it may be a sign of the very largeness of the subject: film is a medium, as well as a language, and it had *better* be studied by philosophers, sociologists, and linguists. Second, film's status has given it the vitality and toughness of an interdisciplinary study and so far sheltered it from much of the damage caused by rigid academic requirements (about which more in a moment). What is important about this situation is that it leaves most film scholars with divided loyalties: on the one hand, they've been trained in the ways of the academy, having got degrees in literature, philosophy, linguistics; on the other, they have to some extent contravened the standard patterns of university politics by becoming involved with movies.

This is the basic contradiction to which Gerald Mast was alluding when he told a reporter for the *Times* that film teachers were "amateurs in the process of professionalizing their students." The *next* generation of film teachers will be no different in outlook or training from their colleagues in the established disciplines. And film departments will have to be established to house them because they will know — or be certified to know —

nothing else but film. There are those who welcome that next generation of "professionals" and those who are sad at the prospect of losing "amateur" status, and it was the struggle between these two groups which was the "deep structure" of the argument at this summer's conference.

The battle wasn't really between Semiologists and eclectic humanists; it was between the professionalists and the amateurs. And that is a psychological dichotomy, not an intellectual opposition. What is "professionalism"? The word is usually taken to mean a certain competence, an efficiency about the job. But that isn't the way it is meant here. Rather, a "Professionalist" is someone who believes more in the profession — its structure and modes of operation — than in the object of study. A professionalist would rather be chairman of the department than teach an extra course. A professionalist goes to all the meetings of professional organizations and conferences. A professionalist — especially in the humanities — desires the cachet of science and is enamoured of that quaint nineteenth-century belief in the efficacy of science that led to the establishment of political *science* where once we enjoyed political *philosophy*. Like Dickens's Mrs. Gradgrind, professionalists are continually enjoining everyone to "go and be something-or-other-ological." Semiological, for example. Semiology was being used, not altogether consciously, by the professionalists at the conference: the confusion of the two could be as damaging to Semiology as to film study. They are in no way identical: Semiology is an intellectual approach, professionalism is a psycho-political mind set.

We can see the attraction semiology can have for the professionalist. It seems to be a science (at least to those who know little of real science) and that is very attractive to the kind of mind that wants order. As Andrew Sarris wrote about one of the main undercurrents at the conference, "I could feel in the audience a voluptuous tremor at the notion of a closed system which could solve all the problems of analysis once and for all." Yes, it must be said, professionalism is a kind of low-grade social fascism.

I wanted this analysis to present a nice, clean set of binary oppositions but, *pace* Levi-Strauss, what we have is really more like a trinary dialectic. On the one hand, the amateurs, or eclectic humanists; on the other, the semiologists; on the third hand, the professionalists hiding behind the mask of semiological science. The professionalist philosophy was best exemplified by one of the participants who explained,

> Most of the film teachers now conducting university courses never had any formal training, and as a result a lot of the standards are sloppy and a lot of the people who teach film are not professionally adequate to do so.

Note that last adjective: not *professionally* adequate; they may very well be intellectually adequate or cinematically adequate, but that doesn't matter: this is a question of professionalism. Now, each of the three parts of that sentence is true, I think. Most film teachers never had formal training (in film, at any rate); standards are sloppy; and there are a lot of inadequate film teachers holding forth. But it's the implications we draw from this statement that are dangerous — and stupid. No one who has applied a certain intelligence to the relationship between competence and training in scholarship could make such a statement. As an English teacher at several major universities for ten years and the former chairman of a university English department, I know that standards in English departments are sloppy and "a lot of the people who teach English are not professionally adequate to do so." Nearly a century of Ph.D.s hasn't changed that sad situation and the rigorous academization of film study isn't going to make film scholarship less sloppy either. What the professionalization of film study *will* do, however, for the discipline (as it has done for the other, established humanities) is give a lot of sloppy, inadequate teachers and scholars credentials behind which

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What the professionalization of film study will do is give a lot of sloppy, inadequate teachers credentials behind which they can hide.

they can hide to build comfortable careers in academia.

The truth is that professionalism lowers standards, it doesn't raise them. It confuses the professional game system with the real world of the intellect. People who could never write a decent book about their subject or teach a useful course in it are still quite capable of taking and passing tests, getting degrees, achieving certification. What's more, all those tests, degrees and certificates provide more work for other professionals. Professionalism is a phenomenon of self-defined involution that rivals the fantasies of Borges.

The amateurs at the first conference on "Film and the University" felt rather as if they were under siege and much time was wasted debating the relative merits of semiotics and "eclectic" film criticism. It should be clear by now that semiology has provided much of the most interesting work in film theory of the late sixties and early seventies (even if it has not yet shown itself to have produced much of *practical* value). Leading semioticians — such as Umberto Eco of the University of Bologna, who was the semiological star of the conference proceedings — have never, to my knowledge, insisted on the absolutist claims for their particular approach that the lesser "professional" adherents of the system are inclined to make. Indeed, Eco, who spoke with wit, sanity, and intelligence, offered the best defense of semiology at the same time as he implicitly censured the false image of the approach that professionalists would like to use as a weapon in their struggle for control of the infrastructure of film study.

In discussing the history of the young science of semiology, Eco described a process of development from the notion of semiology as an apocalyptic closed system of analysis which has all the answers to a much more specific, limited, and difficult system of analysis which has only some of the answers. In other words, semiotics no longer enjoys the heady freedom of youth; it now has to confront the responsibilities of middle age. Eco described succinctly what he called the four stages of film semiotics during the last decade:

— The first stage, which lasted from 1964 until the early seventies, was marked, according to Eco, by the "overevaluation of the linguistic mode" as semiotics struggled to be born, separating itself from the style of linguistics which had given birth to it. By the end of this period semiotic laws could be seen as more profound than the linguistic laws from which they were originally derived. For Eco, Roland Barthes's work was central here.

— This stage was followed by a period in which the main debate was about "the choice of the level of pertinence" of semiotic research. This was the crucial stage in which semioticians discovered that their system of analysis was not so simple and universal as they would have liked to believe at first. There is *not* a single unique code of film. It is much more intricate and complex than anyone ever thought. This was the stage in which semiology was humbled. There would be no easy answers.

— Having come to this conclusion, semiologists turned to a study of one specific aspect of the universe of meaning in film: production: the semiotics of the process, of the *making* of texts. Ideology became central here as politics was added to the semiotic equation.

— Most recently the focus has shifted from production to consumption: the relationship between the receiver of the film message and that message. In other words, the psychoanalytic facet of the film process.

There isn't space here to discuss all the interesting ramifications of this process of development that Eco describes but it is clear, at least, that semiologists are not unaware of the problems involved in their discipline. Having begun with a quasi-scientific system that purported to quantify and offered the prospect of easy, complete analysis, they have worked their way back to the basic question all students of film are puzzled by: how do we know what we see? Along the way, by rephrasing old questions in new ways, they have contributed significantly to our struggle to understand film.

Maybe we could see their contributions better if we thought of semiology as an art (or a code, or system of codes) itself. Eco at one point described himself as a semiologist who found film very useful in helping him to understand semiology. That is a description of the relationship which is modest enough. You will note that it isn't much use, however, to professionalists who hope to ride in on a wave of semiotics. Semiologists have other things to do besides aggrandize in university film departments; professionalists don't. One of the participants quoted Valery on creation: "The creator is one who makes others create." This is the best way, I think, to view not only the relationship between film and semiology but, more generally, between art and criticism: as a dialectic of creation — the filmmaker's construction in film leads to the critic's construction of ideas. Each has its own validity. When criticism reaches a high level — as it has in the best semiotic theorizing — the relationship is reversed, and theory leads back to practice.

On the last day of the conference Gilbert Harman (Philosophy, Princeton) presented what Andrew Sarris called "a masterly demystification of semiology." Good theory is always strengthened by challenges of this kind and Harman's paper led to the most interesting session of the conference as Seymour Chatman (Professor of Rhetoric, Berkeley), Dudley Andrew (Film Division, Iowa), and Umberto Eco joined in the dialogue. Maybe the last word on the subject should be Chatman's, delivered almost as an aside at one point in the debate. Chatman offered a much more precise and useful definition:

"Semiology," he explained, "is a metatheory concerned with analyzing what analysts do." It's important to realize that film theory has, for better or worse, reached this state of abstraction. To put it another way: not to worry, semiology can be fun. It can also be pretty. And just as often as any other complex abstract theory — it can be practically useful. Answering critics who charge semiology with taking the primal pleasure away from the film experience, Eco reminded the audience, "I have never heard of a gynecologist who was incapable of making love." If semiologists are concerned with "analyzing what analysts do" they may, then, be able to tell us quite a lot about the process of professionalization which film study seems to be going through and they may be able to help us survive the ordeal with some sense of the reality of film intact. In any event, it's clear from this first professional conclave of film scholars that bringing up the baby with the movie camera isn't going to be easy.

James Monaco

> What is Semiology? Semiology is an approach to film, literature, and culture in general which sees these phenomena as language systems — collections of "signs" ("semes") — and tries to analyze each of these systems of codes by using methods derived mainly from modern linguistics. Its value is that it focuses attention on just how a film (or a book, or a television commercial) "means" what it does mean. In literature, Roland Barthes is the central figure; in film, Christian Metz. Semiology then is a very French phenomenon, which explains a lot. In English, Peter Wollen's *Signs and Meaning in the Cinema* is the best-known essay in semiology.

REVIEWS

Lina Wertmuller's

SWEPT AWAY
BY AN UNUSUAL DESTINY IN THE BLUE SEA OF AUGUST

In the same boat

Lina Wertmuller is a politically oriented Italian filmmaker with the distinction of having been able to turn out work capable of cutting through the red tape of today's international distribution system and finding widespread attention in America. Two of her films, **Love and Anarchy** and **The Seduction of Mimi**, opened in New York in 1974 to great critical and popular acclaim. Quite an uncommon feat in view of what seems to be an increasing reluctance on the part of those New York exhibitors who still bother with foreign films to bank on anything but the product of well-known, big-name European directors.

By virtue of those splendid '74 releases, however, Wertmuller herself is now something of a big name, and **Swept Away by an Unusual Destiny in the Blue Sea of August**, the third of her films to reach North American theaters, is understandably generating a great deal of interest. Impetuous and ambitious, the film is a contemporary socioeconomic satire exploring variations of the themes presented earlier in both **L&A** and **Mimi**: oppression, sexual hypocrisy, the conflict between institutionally prescribed behavior and personal desire, and a kind of general lunacy seen permeating the human condition.

Swept Away by an Unusual Destiny in the Blue Sea of August
A Cinema V release of a Medusa Films production. Director: Lina Wertmuller. Producer: Romano Cardarelli. Assistant Director: Giovanni Arduini. Cameramen: Giulio Battiferri, Giuseppe Fornari, Stefano Ricciotti. Sound: Mario Bramonti. Music: Piero Piccioni. Sets and Costumes: Enrico Job. Cast: Giancarlo Giannini, Mariangela Melato. 116 mins.

A Boy and His Dog
A LQ/Jaf Presentation. Director: L. Q. Jones. Producer: Alvy Moore. Screenplay: Jones, from the novella by Harlan Ellison. Photography: John Morrill. Editor: Scott Conrad. Music: Tim McIntire. Cast: Don Johnston, Susanne Benton, Jason Robards, Alvy Moore. Technicolor. 90 mins.

Framed
A Paramount Pictures release, produced by Mort and Joel Briskin. Director: Phil Karlson. Screenplay: Mort Briskin, from the novel by Art Powers and Mike Misenheimer. Photography: Jack A. Marta. Editor: Harry Gerstad. Music: Pat Williams. Cast: Joe Don Baker, Conny Van Dyke, Gabriel Dell, John Marley, Brock Peters. 106 mins.

Moses and Aaron
A New Yorker Films release of an AustrianWest German/French/Italian co-production. Directors: Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet. Executive Producer: Klaus Hellwig. Screenplay: Straub and Huillet, based on the opera by Arnold Schoenberg. Photography: Ugo Piccone, Saverio Diamanti, Gianni Canfarelli and Renato Berta. Editors: Straub and Huillet. Sound: Louis Hochet, Ernst Neuspiel, Georges Vaglio and Jeti Grigioni. Cast: Gunter Reich, Louis Devos, Roger Lucas, Eva Csapo. 105 mins.

Hearts of the West
A United Artists release of an MGM production. Director: Howard Zieff. Producer: Tony Bill. Screenplay: Rob Thompson. Photography: Mario Tosi. Editor: Edward Warschilka. Cast: Jeff Bridges, Andy Griffith, Donald Pleasence, Blythe Danner, Alan Arkin, Richard B. Shull, Herbert Edelman, Alex Rocco, Frank Cady, Marie Windsor. 102 mins.

92 In the Shade
A United Artists release of an ITC Presentation. Director and Screenplay: Thomas McGuane. Producer: George Pappas. Photography: Michael C. Butler. Editor: Ed Rothkowitz. Executive Producer: Elliott Kastner. Cast: Peter Fonda, Warren Oates, Margot Kidder, Burgess Meredith, Harry Dean Stanton, Sylvia Miles, Elizabeth Ashley, William Hickey, Louise Latham, Joe Spinell. 91 mins.

*Proletarian idiot chases capitalist bitch in **Swept Away** ...*

A group of wealthy vacationers loll about on the deck of a private yacht cruising in Mediterranean waters somewhere off the coast of Italy. One of their number, a beautiful Milanese blonde named Raffaella (Mariangela Melato) is engaged in a heated political argument in which she reveals herself as an ardent anti-Communist. Her diatribes visibly annoy Gennarino (Giancarlo Giannini), the ship's hired hand who happens to be a poor Sicilian and devoted Communist. Things nearly come to a head when, after Raffaella subjects him to an endless stream of criticism regarding such things as the inferior quality of the food he prepares and the odor emanating from his shirt, Gennarino concludes that he is being deliberately tormented and exploited by a capitalist bitch.

It doesn't take long for him to get his chance to turn the tables. Gennarino is given the task of piloting Raffaella out alone in a dinghy. The engine fails and the two of them end up adrift in the middle of nowhere. They are finally swept along to an uninhabited island, land there, and promptly begin to fling insults at one another. When Gennarino is referred to as a proletarian idiot and a southern boor, he retaliates by calling Raffaella a whore, shithead, capitalist bitch and, God forbid, a Social Democrat. He also decides that he will not lift a finger to help the lady survive on the island. Raffaella protests, saying there ought to be a law against the withholding of help, but Gennarino's repartee is that if there were such a law, all rich people would end up in jail. And so it goes through the middle of the film, with Gennarino gaining the upper hand, enslaving Raffaella and brutally (but rather comically) punishing her as a symbol of all the social and economic ills which, according to his own philosophy, her class has inflicted upon his. There is no mistaking the particulars of his ire, for he spells them all out: Raffaella and her lot are guilty of everything from the unemployment and inflation which mire the lower classes in poverty to the tax shelters which protect the élite.

This kind of political explicitness is one reason why I am inclined to put **Swept Away** in third place among the American releases of Lina Wertmuller. Here, as before, the characters are depicted as living in a world where politics cannot be avoided. But this time the inescapability is more abstract and artificial than real. True, the movie is wittingly fanciful and parabolic, but in their own way so were the earlier films, and they managed to carry off their missions much less obtrusively. The endless ideological verbiage and shouting matches of **Swept Away** cannot measure up to the heartfelt political tensions which were so implicitly developed in **Mimi** and **L&A**. Wertmuller has slipped into an inelegance that brings her uncomfortably close to the proselytism which she so deftly avoided previously.

Neither does this film hold up as well stylistically. It is slower, visually less vibrant, and generally less imaginative in its orchestration of form and content. Dazzlingly fluid camera movements and economical cutting have given way to a more conventional technique, and the high energy level and humorously inventive coor-

dination of sound and image have been somewhat diluted. Thus, what was a hilarious, but meaningful sexual conquest sequence in **Mimi** becomes a grim, drawn out business in **Swept Away**.

But these are all merely relative weaknesses. Even though **Swept Away** doesn't reach the level of its predecessors' superb combination of finely integrated ideas, striking visual impact and consistent entertainment, it is still a work of above-average intelligence and amusement. Much of the pleasure to be derived from the film lies in the extraordinarily spirited performances of Mariangela Melato and Giancarlo Giannini, the latter curiously charming with his owl-like eyes and gravel voice. But there is also satisfaction in seeing how Ms. Wertmuller resolves her plot. It is really less a resolution than an understanding of the sticky complexity that can result when ideals, emotions, and prior commitments meet head-on.

Nathan Rosenstein

Nathan Rosenstein, a freelance writer living in Plainfield, N.J., is a 1973 graduate of Rutgers University, where he studied film interpretation and criticism under Roger Greenspun.

L. Q. Jones's

A BOY AND HIS DOG

Fido, fidas, fidat?

One of the best science fiction films of recent years has quietly appeared. Adapted from Harlan Ellison's award-winning novella, **A Boy and His Dog** comes virtually from left field. Who would have thought that a film of wit and intelligence, in the most mis-used of genres, would come not from someone named Kubrick, Boorman, or Jewison, but from a writer-director more famous as a supporting actor in Sam Peckinpah's films?

> There's nothing weird about me. I'm just an average guy with a little exhibitionism in me.
>
> — Harry Reems,
> at the University of Pennsylvania

It is the modesty of L.Q. Jones that makes this film succeed. Indeed, the lack of pretension is welcome.

In 2024, the world is wiped out by World War III. What is left of America is desert. Remains of houses are under the sand. Primitive societies remain above ground, with names like Rovers and Screamers. Canned food is the only currency used.

Vic is a solo, a lone male scavenger. Blood is his mangey dog. The two communicate through mental telepathy. Blood is such a smart dog, he taught Vic how to read (useful if you want to avoid being stuck with canned beets). Vic and Blood find a girl, Quila June. Blood dislikes her, but Vic follows Quila June to the underground, where what remains of the middle-class lives in a parody of pre-World War One America.

Although the novella and film take place in the future, this is clearly an allegory of contemporary society. Much better it is to be free, if hungry, in an anarchic society, than to submit to slavery in the name of security. Vic may be sexist and crude, but he is no hypocrite.

Where the film improves on Ellison is in the character of Blood. Not only is his part expanded, but he has the best lines. While Vic and Quila June fuck in the corner of a boiler room, Blood discusses the Latin root of the word copulate. Blood's facility with language puts him on par with the best raconteurs of Preston Sturges.

A mediocre director would probably wallow in shock effects. This film is understated visually, so that the brutality is rendered as something everyday, the way Vic probably sees the world. What makes this film a terrific little gem is its humor: Vic underground, strapped down on a table, while semen is mechanically pumped out for eventual insemination, and his "brides" stand in line for "marriage"; Quila June ludicrously cooing to Blood, while Blood mutters to himself and snarls at the girl. I won't reveal the ending except to say that it is in delicious black humor.

This film was produced independently, and is currently getting very limited distribution. But it is worth going out of one's way to see. Word of mouth has helped at the box office, but **A Boy and His Dog**

Peter Nellhaus currently lives in New York City, where he is an exploited worker by day, and a graduate student at New York University's Cinema Department by night. His writings have been published in Take One, Velvet Light Trap, *and* Film Comment.

Jean-Luc Godard's

NUMÉRO DEUX

Advance publicity touted **Numero Deux**, the new Godard, as a remake of **Breathless**, the film that launched his career. However, about all that the two works have in common is their producer, Georges de Beauregard, and the fact that, 16 inflationary years later, Godard was able to make a film at roughly the same cost — 600,000 francs ($120,000) — as **Breathless**.

Numero Deux is cyclic in construction. It starts off in Godard's film factory in Grenoble, with Godard himself delivering a long rambling monologue about how the film came to be made. ("Alors, un jour, tu vois, il y a Georges qui a débarqué ici... et puis Georges... il y avait 15 ans que je ne l'avais pas revu... et puis il a vu toutes ces machines, et puis il a dit... il m'a dit: Jeannot, ben, Jeannot, faut faire quelque chose avec toutes ces machines.") Godard in his workshop also provides the end of the film. In between come glimpses from the life of a working class French family: a youngish husband and wife, two small daughters, two grandparents. The husband is, or has been, a cuckold. The wife masturbates. Grandad is an ex-Communist militant who realizes that, politically, he too was *cocu*. Everyone's got problems.

To show us these good people, Godard uses two television screens, the actual cinema screen acting only as a black background. So your eyes shuttle between two different images. The soundtrack meanwhile is punctuated by metallic bleeps, like concrete music. Godard, presumably, is trying to reproduce the theories and practice of Dziga Vertov. Who was it defined "disciple" as "one who betrays his master"?

Let's not be entirely negative, though. Godard is right to point out that the capitalist mode of production screws up one's sex life along with everything else. And the twin screen gimmick pays off when a televised May Day parade is equated with extracts from a film by Claude Sautet. The idea behind May Day was that workers should down tools in a one-day general strike. But the politicians and trade union leaders connived to turn the thing into a public holiday, and now it's just another aspect of showbiz. Here, at least, Godard seems closer to the Situationists than to Mao Tse-tung.

Yet Godard himself is a kind of Sautet, only for Left Bank intellectuals hungry for aesthetic novelty and willing to pay the equivalent of three dollars to be preached at in an art house. How many Renault workers can afford to do the same? How many need a bourgeois filmmaker to tell them they're exploited, even if they can decipher his message? (**Numero Deux**, of course, was not shown in the so-called Paris Red Belt. That's kung fu and porn territory.) Those culturally-deprived workers, nonetheless, are the ones who are going to change the system, if ever it is changed. A political movie can be an effective morale booster, but whatever discontent it reflects is already existing in society. It is a symptom, not a weapon. As somebody — I think it was Godard — once remarked: "You don't make the revolution with a camera."

Geoffrey Minish

deserves to be more that a cult item. And if you hate most movie animals, you will probably love Blood. Sentimental he's not.

Take that, Benji!

Peter Nellhaus

Phil Karlson's

FRAMED

A definition of evil

Phil Karlson's **Framed** is unequivocally the finest American film I have seen so far this year (1975). Discarded by Paramount at Manhattan showcase theaters during the New York Film Festival, **Framed** nevertheless consolidates Karlson's reputation as one of the foremost action directors in the cinema. Most of Karlson's films project a unique and personal vision of a universe controlled by organized evil and corruption, but few of them acknowledge the halftones and moral shadings which must penetrate such a world, no matter how dissolute its inhabitants or corrosive its values. **Framed**, like Karlson's very best movies — e.g., **Kansas City Confidential** (1952), **99 River Street** (1953), and **The Brothers Rico** (1957) — successfully creates a macrocosm of undefined morality, where one man's idea of evil is the next man's concept of good.

Phil Karlson has been directing movies since 1944. In 1955 he aroused a minor stir with establishment critics for his "sleeper", **The Phenix City Story**, a documentary-like exposé of the vice capital of Alabama. His hour in the limelight was brief, however, and he quickly found himself relegated to such disparate studio projects as **Kid Galahad** (1962), an Elvis Presley vehicle; **The Silencers** (1966), first and best in the Dean Martin-Matt Helm series; and **Ben** (1972), the sequel to **Willard**.

With the phenomenal success of his last film, **Walking Tall** (1973), Phil Karlson emerged a "hot" director at the age of 65. **Walking Tall** is the apotheosis of a certain *kind* of Phil Karlson movie, the thesis film which simplifies issues and distorts characters to illustrate the director's one recurring theme: the helplessness of the individual against a profligate system. The intensity and formal rigor with which **Walking Tall** is executed render it superior to earlier exercises in this vein, e.g., **The Phenix City Story** and **Key Witness** (1960), but the film still suffers for its lack of moral ambiguity and the absence of much dimension in the characterizations.

Framed, like **Walking Tall**, is basically the same story that has formed the skeletal outline for most of Karlson's more personal films. An innocent man is framed for a crime he never committed. The corruption that threatens to engulf him extends into every available resource of legal and political power. Forced to plea-bargain and serve four years in prison, Ron Lewis (Joe Don Baker) ferrets out his "dragons" when he is released, and eliminates each one of them through methods equally as corrupt and illegal as those with which he was originally framed.

The extra moral dimension in **Framed** stems from director Karlson's willingness to question the tactics of revenge Baker employs against his oppressors. Using Mafia connections acquired in prison, Baker enlists the forces of evil to combat evil. Karlson takes this idea even further by implying that gradations of evil supersede outmoded distinctions between good and evil, especially when confronted with the malevolent society his protagonist inhabits. Therefore, when the hit man (Gabriel Dell) given Baker as a contract turns out to be an old crony from the "big house," this hired killer sacrifices his "professional" career and future safety to help avenge his friend's frameup.

Definitions of evil are continually shifting in this manner throughout the course of the film. The most generous relationships in the movie exist between Baker and Dell, and between Baker and John Marley, the Mafia big shot who aids him inside prison as well as outside. And yet both Dell *and* Marley represent larger extensions of the localized corruption responsible for incarcerating Baker in the first place.

If **Framed** were nothing more than its action sequences (and it most assuredly is), it would still stand head and shoulders above most current films. The violence in the movie explodes like lightning, releasing the tension that has been accumulating simultaneously in the protagonist and the viewer. The action set pieces, particularly the *pièce de résistance* involving the collision of an onrushing train with an automobile perched on a railroad crossing, are models of precision and clarity in camera placement and montage.

There is so much to remember from **Framed**: the lazy ambience of the small Tennessee town in which it occurs; the evocative interior of Baker's night club on the outskirts of town, the neon red of its walls contrasting sharply with the cool, dark wood paneling; the blue-gray steeliness that suffuses the prison scenes; and the fine performances from an exemplary cast which includes one of Karlson's more believable women (played by Conny Van Dyke). Karlson has never seemed terribly interested in his female characters, except as nagging moral consciences for his obsessed males, and it is a credit to Ms. Van Dyke's considerable talent that she invests the most difficult, platitudinous lines in Mort Briskin's script with something approaching credibility.

It is really distressing to see a film as excellent as **Framed** receive such short shrift nowadays. Critics come and go, writing lengthy essays on **Nashville**, **Jaws**, and **Three Days of the Condor**, but the fact remains that Phil Karlson's films project a consistent vision of the world that is more personal, more disturbing, and far more formally realized than the combined *oeuvres* of Robert Altman, Steven Spielberg, and Sydney Pollack.

Through the hulking presence of Joe Don Baker's central performance, the staccato rhythms of its action sequences, the visceral force of its violence, and the moral contradictions and implications which Karlson has realized in his *mise-en-scène*, **Framed** approaches that sublime level where form and content, continually reinforcing one another, become virtually indistinguishable. It just may be Phil Karlson's masterpiece.

George Morris

Quick Take
Sidney Pollack's

THE YAKUZA

Someone at Warner Brothers seems to have a plan. No studio in the thirties and forties had as great a commitment to the genre film as WB had and now forty years later, somehow, someone in the conglomerate structure of Warner Communications Industries seems to be paying quiet homage to those old WB genres. In the last couple of years the company has distributed a good half dozen "New Genre" films — movies which have a distanced, analytical dimension to them. Examples: Jan Troell's absorbing **Zandy's Bride**, not only a New Western, but also a commentary on the form; Mike Hodges' **Terminal Man** — film noir as science fiction, and a stylish essay on the dark urban strains of the genre.

Most recently Sidney Pollack's **The Yakuza**, which introduces us to the Yakuza genre, but which must also be read as a commentary on that Japanese genre, an introduction specially prepared for Americans in order to connect it, through Robert Mitchum, to their own film noir heritage. Not really a film "about" contemporary Japan, nor even about an American view of contemporary Japan, **The Yakuza** is both, combined with the forms and concerns of the new (to us) genre. A pretty tricky structure, and an intriguing one. **The Yakuza** probably won't do much better than those other two box office failures — but watch out for it. It's worth taking a look at.

— JM

Jean-Marie Straub's

MOSES AND AARON

Moses, Monotheism and Music

The films of Jean-Marie Straub have always sought to merge a radical political engagement, an academic reverence for political and cultural history, and a kind of

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George Morris has reviewed films for The Village Voice *for two years, as well as contributing to* The Boston Real Paper, Changes, *and* Film Comment. *His book,* Errol Flynn, *was published by Pyramid Publications in June.*

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monastic minimalism of style. His latest work, **Moses and Aaron**, based on the opera by Arnold Schoenberg, is no exception. It shares with **The Chronicle of Anna Magdalena Bach** both an obsession with the use of direct sound and an involvement with the place of music and the musician in society. Like **Othon**, which was a radicalized cinematic mounting of the little-known play by Corneille, the movie is a rigorous dialectic between a preexisting theatrical text and cinematic *mise-en-scène*. Like **Unreconciled** (which Straub took freely from Heinrich Boll's *Billiards at Half Past Nine*), it is concerned with Germany's recent past. Yet perhaps because the Schoenberg opera is so strong in itself, **Moses and Aaron** is far more accessible than any of the previous films.

Most significant motion pictures are not just aesthetic achievements, but responses to the technological, mechanical resources of their times. In his desire to record faithfully a difficult twentieth century opera, Straub used a technique ironically similar to Peter Bogdanovich's for **At Long Last Love**. Only the orchestrations were prerecorded; the singers, equipped with very small portable earphones, performed on location in the Middle East. Direct sound is, of course, nothing short of a moral issue for Straub, and with vocal lines of such asymmetrical complexity, probably no other method would have been feasible. But the effect is extraordinary. There is the sense of immediacy that one finds in early Hollywood sound films or in *cinéma vérité*, yet the impeccable sound quality more than does service to the Schoenberg score. Penelope Gilliat once commented about **The Chronicle of Anna Magdalena Bach** (which was made up largely of tableaux of musicians in period costumes playing Bach's work) that at least it *was* better than looking at the album cover for ninety minutes. The remark holds even truer here, but without the same implicit discounting. The flawless matching of lips, voices, intensities and expressions adds a level of fidelity all but unknown in recorded music.

Straub's use of direct sound is linked to his Marxist, post-Brechtian, ideological orientation. **Moses and Aaron** surely is filmed theater, but the expression is no longer a dirty word when the film seeks to acknowledge indirectly that almost all cinema is filmed theater, that the medium has traditionally been one devoted to the artificial representation of events. Some of the picture's bows to Brecht are obvious — the title cards that designate the separation of sequences; the formally, geometrically grouped chorus; the passages in which blank screen provides minimal visual counterpart to sung passages; the use of a still photograph to indicate the Nile — but the movie's approach is more fundamentally analytic. Straub has commented that he refuses to show **Moses and Aaron** without subtitles in non-German-speaking countries, even though opera-goers are quite accustomed to losing the literary level of foreign texts. Schoenberg's words (which the composer wrote himself) clearly interest the filmmaker as much as the music. For an American, at least, seeing the film is unlike any other experience with German opera: the logic of the words suddenly becomes a key to both the music and Straub's conscientiously motivated framings and camera movements. With both its orthographic and photographic interventions, the subtitled film works perfectly against the emotionalism and romanticism inevitably inherent in opera.

Like any good Marxist, Straub is obsessed with history, and **Moses and Aaron** works on several historical levels. First, on the level of the opera, it puts up for inspection and scrutinizes what Schoenberg produced over thirty years ago. Straub reveals an uncanny sense of taste, for he at once escapes the bourgeois flourishes of usual opera spectacle, while showing, at the same time, an historical appreciation for the conventions that must invariably be employed for a faithful rendition of the work as intended. On a deeper, more philosophical level, the film is a study of monotheism and its place in the western tradition. Moses was right for his time, the film argues: monotheism was at least a step in the direction of rationalist thought, and from this point of view represents a Judaic tradition that is admirable. Schoenberg's relationship to this historical tradition — as a Jew himself, directly threatened by Nazism — lends the work one more level of historical resonance.

As drama, Straub's successes tend to be Schoenberg's also. The movie's visual spareness in the beginning sequences matches a comparable reduction in the music itself. The camera holds shots almost interminably, meditating on the singers, then proceeds with a long, leisurely, lateral movement across the rocks and barren landscape that make up the setting. Straub then adds small touches of spectacle as Moses performs the miracles to convince the people that the god they cannot see still does exist — the staff turns into a snake; the hand becomes leprous and is subsequently healed; the water changes to blood. All are portrayed through simple, yet effective editing. The film's apogee comes with the worship of the Golden Calf, for which the dionysian revels are suggested with means unusually elaborate for a Straub movie — still stark and simplified, to be sure, yet strikingly pagan. A couple of shots suffice to suggest drunken indulgence in alcohol; the sacrifice of several virgins is shown in a single, severe, geometrically balanced long shot; a single nude couple portrays an orgy. The total progression is precise and perfectly balanced; the film's overall structure is classic and triangular.

While hardly a film to see when you are

tired, distracted, or otherwise preoccupied, **Moses and Aaron**, for all the demands it makes, is also rarely boring. And like Straub's earlier Bach movie, it sees the work of the musician as something of a crystalization of all that is noble in the Protestant work ethic. The love with which Straub records the careful performances of his singers is testament enough to his admiration for their training and craft put to the service of some of the most complexly beautiful music in the twentieth century vocal repertory.

George Lellis

Howard Zieff's

HEARTS OF THE WEST

A certain fondness

Safe in his bedroom, Lewis Tater is acting out and typing his "western prose." Soon, however, Lewis (Jeff Bridges) embarks on a great adventure, as he takes off to see the "real west", where he can absorb some "local color" and study writing. Thus begins the chaotic, slapstick, often moving, and very funny saga of an incredibly naive Iowa boy who makes good in spite of himself in the wilds of Hollywood, circa 1936.

Hearts of the West is Howard Zieff's second film, and like its predecessor, **Slither**, it's about the foul-ups of this world, who can't win for losing, and are so busy deceiving the next guy they can't tell when they're being conned themselves. It's also a movie which manages to develop its characters so that they have more than one dimension; even when their behavior is predictable, it's recognizably human and sympathetic. One attribute, shared by nearly everyone, is thick-headedness. The men have their hearts in the right place, but their minds are somewhere else.

Jeff Bridges gets better with every role, and here he has a difficult task — to be both a believable hero and a not-too-bright stooge. He succeeds handsomely and reinforces his claim to being one of today's major American stars. Arkin nearly steals every scene he's in and Blythe Danner recalls the resilient babes of the '30s who had lives of their own but could be relied on when things got rough. She has wide blue eyes that miss nothing, a scratchy voice and a shade of blonde hair that wasn't on the colorists' charts back then. The secondary roles are equally well cast. Anthony James and Richard B. Shull are especially adept as the shifty proprietors of the writers' school — a species of malign Laurel and Hardy, and it's nice to see Marie Windsor (a leading bad girl of B's from another era — the '50s) rescued from oblivion.

Hearts of the West is part of the current nostalgia trend; specifically, it's a hybrid genre uniting the not-too-distant past (but distant enough so that the audience can't quibble with its details), the west and movie satires on Hollywood. As such it works very well, but at times, scenarist Rob Thompson and director Zieff get carried away. Although the film is deliberately haphazard, frequently its pell-mell style is too much of a good thing, and you wish Thompson and Zieff would relax and let you enjoy it. Toward the end, when the disparate story threads seem about to converge, they throw in a few new characters and start off on a different tack. Thompson and Zieff have such affection for their people and the situations they're in, they can't bear to leave anything out.

This affection, so noticeable on the screen, may also explain why the critics have embraced the film so warmly. It's one of the few recent comedies which is *fond* of its characters (without ridiculing their eccentricities), and these individuals in turn, like each other. They try, in their ineffectual ways, to help others. As in real life, sometimes it works; often it doesn't. But basically the people are kind; Thompson and Zieff are not trying to encompass a vast historical epoch (**Love and Death**), find fun in gore and multiple amputations (**Monty Python and the Holy Grail**), or bump people off (**The Fortune**). It's a healthy sign.

Judith M. Kass

Thomas McGuane's

92 IN THE SHADE

Laid back and drifting

Thomas McGuane has transferred his surrealistic novel **92 in the Shade** to the screen with remarkable ease and assurance for a novice director. It may be more mood than movie, but McGuane's first film as writer-director confirms the suspicions raised by his screenplay for **Rancho Deluxe** — that McGuane is the most easygoing absurdist presently at work in cinema.

Like Frank Perry's **Rancho, 92 in the Shade** centers on an odd assortment of off-centered characters, half-mad with heat and ennui, who turn to the most bizarre acts as the only logical antidote to boredom. The setting is the Florida Keys, where an aimless young drifter named Tom Skelton (Peter Fonda) has returned home to become a fishing guide, for no better reason than the fact that he has "eliminated all the other options." This decision immediately places him in conflict with Nichol Dance (Warren Oates), a suicidally-inclined, pistol-packing alcoholic who looks upon Skelton's possible competition as a personal affront. When Skelton sets fire to Dance's skiff after enduring one of the older guide's less than friendly practical jokes, Dance lays down the law — if Skelton guides, he will shoot him.

Having set up this conflict perfunctorily enough, McGuane settles down to the real business at hand, the observation of confused souls trying to gain a sure footing in a dreamworld of anarchy and enervation. Following the path of his novel — but only up to a point — McGuane casts his not unsympathetic eye on such figures as Skelton's father (William Hickey), who has taken refuge in a bed enshrouded with mosquito netting after a lifetime of failure ("Even my whorehouse was a flop!"); Carter (Harry Dean Stanton), a ferret-like fisherman who is really somewhat of an Iago when it comes to setting Dance after Skelton; Jeannie, a high school majorette who grew up to be Carter's prodigal wife, shrewdly played by Elizabeth Ashley as a bloodshoot nervous condition whose nerve ends have been screwed on too tight; and Goldsboro (Burgess Meredith), Skelton's grandfather, a self-styled political boss who anguishes over what is happening to the later generations of Skeltons.

With all the logic and continuity of a dream, McGuane hops from incident to incident in an almost hallucinative fashion. Whole sections of stylized dialogue have been lifted intact from the novel — "I was explaining about how unattractive a day on the water can come to be." "But I'd of known that a person would spoil a boat trip if he only went out to shoot himself." — only to sound perfectly natural in the context of the film's ambiance. Michael C. Butler's sun-drenched photography further distorts any sense of reality by the frequent use of wide-angle lenses. Everything about **92 in the Shade** seems to be filtered through a misty mind's eye, whether it be a bath shared by Skelton and his sensual girlfriend (Margot Kidder) in a candle-lit room, or a tirade by Dance about the need for his inspiring "credence."

Where McGuane the writer and McGuane the filmmaker part company is at the end of **92 in the Shade**. In the novel, Dance makes good on his promise to kill the submissive Skelton, and is in turn killed by a fisherman whom Skelton was guiding. In the film, Skelton relieves Dance of his gun and tosses it overboard; rather than be enraged, Dance is relieved, and proceeds to laugh and joke with the younger guide about the folly of their actions. It is as if McGuane, confronted with living and breathing entities rather than characters in his typewriter, grew so fond of Skelton and Dance that he could not destroy them, much like he could only punish the anarchaic rustlers of **Rancho Deluxe** with a short stay on a prison farm.

The final clouded image of the two guides, back-slapping and guffawing, brings the dream to a peaceful close, gently reconciling the opposing forces as the two of them sway gently in their skiff on the placid water. McGuane may not be more inspired as a director than he is as a novelist, but he certainly is more laid back. Which helps **92 in the Shade** drift all the more easily off the screen and into the consciousness.

Joseph P. Leydon

COLUMNS

Outs

'Buked and Scorned

What is this, open season? Last spring, Robert Altman had his press agent call me up. She passed along not the usual story suggestion, or invitation for a drink, but a warning, delivered with all due concern. If Altman ever met me, she said, he would punch me out.

More recently, in *Playboy*, Charles Bronson reiterated his threat to "get" me. A month before the opening of **The Master Gunfighter**, Tom Laughlin took a large ad in Times Square and denounced me and many of my colleagues. Laughlin's ad, in fact, was an electric sign, just over Nathan's (a favorite eating spot of mine, as it happens). The sign spelled out some supposedly hot stickey about critics, and asked some questions Laughlin must have figured were embarrassing. There were no open threats of violence, but Laughlin has made a reputation as a man with a crazy temper. With Altman and Bronson weighing heavily on me, perhaps I overreacted. But I stared at Laughlin's electric sign and felt a little like Bugs Bunny when Elmer Fudd pops in for the first day of rabbit season.

Nothing has come, so far, from any of this. Laughlin asked the citizens of Times Square if they knew what critic had written some of the dialogue for **Sisters**? He then supplied the answer: me. Well, he's right, up to a point, and not much of a point, either. Not only did I write dialogue for **Sisters**, I cooked up a whole mini-documentary for it. Laughlin must have sensed his information was a little thin, because he then proceeded to make fun of the spelling of my last name, which the bearer has always considered stalwart and forthright. Well, if he had to do it, Times Square was just the place.

Charles Bronson had threatened to "get" me once before, in an *Esquire* profile by Roger Ebert. The *Playboy* piece just reiterated the threat and expanded it. Harry Crews, the novelist who wrote the Bronson article, suggested that, after listening to Bronson go on, if he were me he'd "leave the country. Or, better, volunteer for the astronaut program and leave the world." Bronson, however, has always specified that he does not mean to "get" me "physically." What are the alternatives? Will he "get" me intellectually? Spiritually? It is somewhat comforting that Bronson has disqualified himself from the area which, frankly, would have been my major concern. Besides, he is quoted as believing that, presumably like all critics, I am "pear-shaped." This means that if he thinks he's ever got me spotted in a crowd, he's got the wrong guy.

Altman, by all accounts a Quixotic personality, never made good on his threat, even though he had a couple of chances. We still haven't met, but we've stood around together in the same general area on two occasions and exchanged what I'd consider glances of uneasy recognition. Instead, Altman made his feelings, just slightly expanded, known a second time, through a friend doing an interview with him: "Tell Cocks I hate his guts, and if I ever meet him, I'll deck him."

Now there is a recklessness in all this that is a little admirable. On the face of it, there seems to be something gutsy about a filmmaker bad-mouthing or threatening a critic even before the review has appeared. The critic will kill him in print, right? He's just doing himself in. Why not just be cool and politic? Well, moves like all these may not be especially cool (and they are all the better for that). But I believe that they are extremely cunning.

Consider.

It seems pretty obvious that Laughlin wasn't interested in questions or answers, but in public accusations. He thought it fairly amusing and somehow disreputable that Roger Ebert had done the script for **Beyond the Valley of the Dolls**, that Pauline Kael was a true champion of Robert Altman, that Paul Zimmerman had written some screenplays. Unfortunately for Laughlin, his campaign and his movie, he miscalculated the degree of public interest in the extra-curricular activities of movie critics. In Kael's case, he had nothing more damning to say about her than what anyone who reads her already knows: she likes Robert Altman movies. But is it so dreadful that film critics write screenplays, or want to make movies, or have already done any of these things? When they were all writing criticism around *Cahiers* and scraping up financing for first features, I don't recall anyone ever accusing Truffaut, Godard, Rohmer and Chabrol of being in the tank. As James Monaco's smart piece in a recent *More* pointed out, no favor or service a critic can render a filmmaker — including a padded review — could ever be effective or important enough to justify the sort of conspiracies that are rumored to go on. Simply put, it just isn't worth it for a critic to be bought off, or for a movie company to try and buy.

What influence that does exist happens on a subtler, more personal level: directors want to be your pals. My own solution to this problem, since I have friends — some very close — who are filmmakers, is that I simply don't review my friends' movies. What's interesting now is that the film people whose work one has not admired, or not admired adequately, choose to hit out on exactly the same sort of personal level they may try to charm you. This, at least in my experience, is new.

It also regenerates one of the perpetual myths of American filmmaking: if you don't like my movie, it must be personal. It can't be the movie; anything but that. Hollywood is a town full of folks working up the real reasons — usually sexual or financial — somebody knocked a movie. If they can't make up the reasons, then they create a few themselves. This is what I think Altman, Bronson and Laughlin are up to. If Bronson comes out in a new picture, and gets rapped, he can always shrug and say, "What do you expect after what I said about him?" (Actually, he's been good his past two times out, in **Breakout** and **Hard Times**. Indeed **Hard Times**, directed by Walter Hill, is a nifty movie all on its own.) Laughlin has tried to cook up grudges, but the quarrel has remained, despite all the effort and expense he's invested, one-sided and impersonal: no one likes or can take especially seriously his storm-trooper parables.

Altman initially swore to lay me out not over any film of his — I'd given his work mixed notices in the past — but what I'd said about Karen Black's performance in **Day of the Locust**, as woeful a job of acting (and as awkward a piece of miscasting) as any I can remember in recent years. **Nashville** hadn't been seen yet — at least not by me — and I know he expected I'd review it and work it ever. So he probably figured he had nothing to lose, and that he stood to gain a personal grudge that could excuse a knock.

I saw Nashville, it surprised me. It unsettled and moved me and, although I had reservations about it, I thought it was a major piece of work. I wrote a review that said so. And still Altman wanted to punch me out. I'd heard for a long time, from many people, that Altman was a good guy. This was the first time I started to think they might be right.

Jay Cocks

Film as Business

The Distribution Contract
Part I

For purposes of this discussion, you have produced your film without a preproduction — financing — distribution agreement. You have located an interested distributor and you are now talking terms together. What are the elements of a distribution agreement with which you should be concerned?

This is of course a vital document. Unless you are literally selling title to your negative outright for cash on the barrelhead (a most unusual procedure in our industry), there will be a continuing relationship between you and the distributor, subject to many conceivable stresses and strains.

It is of course important that you be dealing with a distributor in whom you have confidence. Important, but not always possible. With a distributor in good faith, the letter of the contract may prove less important than its spirit. But in entering an agreement, negotiated at arm's length, one cannot count on beneficence or largesse. The terms incorporated in the paper signed are generally your agreement — and none other.

Consequently, the contract should be negotiated with care, preferably by experienced counsel, but if not, with at least some type of form as reference. In that connection, may I suggest use of Alexander Lindey's distinguished work *Entertainment, Publishing and the Arts* (Clark Boardman, 1963, with annual supplements), which contains a distribution form, as well as other valuable materials. This could serve as a useful guide or checklist.

The several essential clauses of the agreement are not here stated in any particular order of priority.

In the first instance, the terms of the grant or license must be set forth. Presumably, this is an exclusive license, as few distributors relish the prospect of competing against others with an identical product. Even fewer will pay good money up front for a non-exclusive privilege.

Exclusive rights to the film then — but for what territory, what uses and what terms? Here is where careful draftsmanship can be vital, as the court records are full of cases involving interpretation of rights granted based on language used. The remedy for this, if there is one, is the explicit use of words. The grant should be specific. If the geographic territory is world-wide, that is not hard to define. If it be the United States of America, its territories and possessions (which brings up the perennial question of what is Puerto Rico?), and the provinces and territories comprising Canada, that can be stated.

The ability of television, airplanes and ships to cross borders can cause problems. Does a grant of television rights, in the United States only, authorize a showing over Detroit or Buffalo stations covering broad and well-populated areas of Canada? What if someone else has Canadian television rights and can broadcast across the border from Toronto or Vancouver?

If there are geographical problems of this nature, the time to settle them is over the bargaining table, or in the attorney's office. Representing American distributors for foreign films, I have often insisted on all television rights in the United States and Canada but sometimes on a French film, rights in Quebec Province have been presold and are not available. Can the English-language film be televised over that area, possibly harming the French-speaking rights previously granted?

Similarly, distributors frequently insist on the right to license exhibition in ships, planes and trains. Representing distributors, care is frequently taken to include not only "ships flying the United States flag", but preferably "ships departing United States ports", because many United States-owned ships sail under foreign registry and shipping rights to a film can be valuable. The same reasoning applies to airplanes.

The issue of what media are covered by the grant is, of course, crucial. Once upon a time there was a film business, fairly well comprised of theatrical (i.e. licenses to theatres) and non-theatrical (licenses to schools, clubs, churches and other institutions). That day is gone. Television is here, not just in one form but in many. There is network television, syndication television (licensing station by station), cable television, theatre television, pay cable, hotel television, cassettes, video-recordings and any number of variations soon to arise. One foresees (and soon) huge wall screens at home, the equivalent of mammoth screens in theatres. Your distributor friends will want the right to license your work, generally, in all the media throughout the territory, new and old. You may differ, desiring to retain certain rights in your film. The matter must be determined.

A word of caution here as to legal rules of contractual interpretation. If the rights acquired are simply spelled out specifically, only those rights will be acquired. Consequently, the distributor may well desire to use additional language such as will authorize him to distribute by "all means or techniques now known or hereafter becoming known" and will probably add to that list of specific rights the phrase "but not by way of limitation". In other words, the listed rights are only illustrative of the broad general grant. If you don't wish to grant him any particular right — and have the bargaining clout to insist on it — it should be explicitly set forth as an exception to the rights granted or otherwise described.

Geographic territory and media rights are vital — so is term, or the duration of rights. Again, once upon a time a film's life was limited and the bulk of distribution proceeds could clearly be anticipated in the first 18 months or two years after the contract. No longer! Films now open to poor or fair business — and later return to sensational grosses. Revival runs and revival theatres are now commonplace. Television uses pictures as "old as the hills" and even older. **Gone With The Wind** makes its runs successfully for each new generation.

Furthermore, a television deal of any nature usually requires a protracted term. Television is frequently barred for the first 18 months or two years of theatrical distribution and can only start after a waiting period. Distributors accordingly are asking anywhere from 7 years to perpetuity — and getting it. On the other hand, reversion of rights may be valuable to you and you may seek to limit the term. A common ground based on bargaining power must be found and stated.

Another issue to be confronted concerns supplementary rights. A distributor may feel your film needs further editing. Or — conversely — that it requires new scenes or new photography (a torrid love scene on a Long Island beach, perhaps?). If you insist on a "no cut" policy or a "no-cut without your permission in writing" policy this is the time to express it.

Similarly, questions arise as to who copyrights a new film, credit requirements, advertising restrictions, TV and radio advertising, the use or non-use of your title, dubbing, use of music in film or other media, merchandise tie-ins and other subsidiary rights. The distributor will generally seek the broadest authority in these areas.

Turning to a different area, the distributor will seek from you — and is entitled to — your assurance or warranty that you own free and clear the rights you are licensing (or with exceptions set out on a separate schedule). In other words, you warrant that you are entitled to enter into this agreement and have not done (and will not do) anything that conflicts with, diminishes or impairs your grant in any way, manner or form. You must assure him that your film is not libelous

Jay Cocks, born in the Bronx, reviews film for Time *magazine and is a regular* Take One *contributor.*

or an invasion of someone's privacy, or in violation of any other third person's rights. You must warrant you have acquired all underlying literary rights. Further, that there are no claims or litigations pending that will adversely affect your grant.

Back of your warranties will stand your indemnity — your assurance that your warranties are true and if they are not, or if they are challenged, you will pay the loss suffered by virtue of your error, mistake or deceit. Frequently, this includes the item of counsel fees necessary in defense of a lawsuit.

Sometimes, the indemnity is limited to a particular sum of money, if you are being paid very little and if the distributor is willing to assume the risks. Sometimes the indemnity is unlimited. This will depend on the importance of your film, the risks involved, the monies being paid, or other related considerations.

[To be continued]

Michael F. Mayer

Letter from Paris

The new ripple

Ever since the New Wave, it has been traditional to view the cinematic health of a country in terms of the yearly number of new directors who make promising debuts or talent-confirming second films. Nowhere has this been truer than in France, of course, where the modest, low-budget, artistically ambitious film has become a staple: Jacques Demy has commented that just about any director in France can get to make another film as long as he gets good reviews for his last. Thus, although many Frenchmen are intensely critical of their cinema right now, describing things as the dullest they have been since the 1950s, at least three new French films have now appeared which display the talents of new filmmakers — Paul Vecchiali's **Femmes Femmes**, Jacques Doillon's **Les Doigts dans la tête**, and Daniel Duval's **Le Voyage d'Amélie**. And the first two, while not first features for the authors involved, are certainly films of which any country could be proud.

Femmes Femmes has the closest links with the New Wave, if only from the fact that Vecchiali did write for *Cahiers du Cinéma* in the 1960s. Particularly skillful as a critic in reviewing films like **Les Carabiniers**, Vecchiali's own effort shows an understanding and assimilation (and not just imitation, thankfully), not only of Godard, but Godard's own sources in Brecht. The subject is a pair of aging ladies (played by two rather remarkable women of the theater, Sonia Saviange and Hélène Surgère), who share an apartment together, living a good part of their lives on the other side of sobriety. They dream about the stardom that has passed them by (one is still a practicing actress, the other "works" as a domestic), the men they might attract (one apparently advertises in the personal column of the newspaper), the glamour of which their lives clearly have so little.

Femmes Femmes Director: Paul Vecchiali. Scenario and dialogue: Paul Vecchiali and Noël Simsolo. Director of photography (black and white): George Strouve. Editing: Paul Vecchiali. Music: Roland Vincent. Sound: Roland Bonfanti. Production: Unité Trois (92, rue Daguerre, Paris). Distribution: Lasofrance. 120 minutes. Cast: Hélène Surgère, Sonia Saviange, Michel Delahaye, Noël Simsolo, Michel Duchaussoy, Huguette Forge, Jean-Claude Guiget, Liza Braconnier, Henry Courseaux, Claire Versane, Marcel Gassouk.

Les Doigts dans la tête Director: Jacques Doillon. Scenario and dialogue: Jacques Doillon and Philippe Defrance. Director of photography (black and white): Yves Lafaye. Editing: Noëlle Poisson. Sound: Alain Contrault. Production and distribution: U.Z. (25, rue Clisson, Paris). 104 minutes. Cast: Christophe Soto, Olivier Bousquet, Roselyne Villaumé, Anne Zacharias.

Le Voyage d'Amélie Director: Daniel Duval. Scenario: Daniel Duval. Director of photography (Technicolor): Michel Cenet. Music: Maurice Vander. Production: Films 2001 (6, rue Montsigny, Paris). Distribution: Michele Dimitri. 90 minutes. Cast: Daniel Duval, Louise Chevalier, Max Morel, Stéphane Bouy, Hervé Lasseron.

Vecchiali's film is long and incredibly trying in its first hour, until its concluding third rounds out and gives sense to the whole. It has, in fact, three subjects: theater, film and life. The movie is basically a series of subtle, carefully worked-out shifts from one state of being to another. The women's long dialogues, invariably filmed in single, fixed-camera long takes, belong to the first category of theater. The actresses slip in and out of broad, stylized playing, some of which partakes of the worst pseudo-childlike excesses of cuteness that one can recall in a recent, adult film. Then suddenly **Femmes Femmes** will come to life as an old fashioned movie. An orchestra will be heard on the soundtrack and one of the women will commence a song, shot always with the kind of lingering, glamour close-up that one would expect of, let us say, Alice Faye — except that the black and white photography is unflatteringly lit, and the women's voices are bad. Vecchiali constantly frames his women against the pin-ups of the female stars of yesteryear that the two have on their walls, making the kind of visual comparison that Godard would always do between his leading ladies and art print portraits by famous painters. (These same pin-ups are frequently intercut, as well, as a continuity device between scenes.) Events take on occasional Hollywood turns of fate. The man of their dreams (Michel Duchaussoy) comes to the door, for example, but the inevitable jealousy between the two results, by way of an instant *film noir*, in his inevitable murder — which is immediatly forgotten as the movie shifts to another reality.

What give the film its greatest excitement, however, are the constant intrusions of an outside world. Just when we have become convinced that part of **Femmes Femmes**'s stylization is to be shot entirely in a studio, we get a shot through an open window with Paris' Montparnasse tower in deep focus in the background: it has been a real apartment made to look like a studio set. Only after the film is midway through do we see any reasonably public settings — first, a café (which still looks somewhere between a set and reality); then, only at the end, location shooting on a Paris street. A similar expansion takes place thematically. Talk of cirrhosis adds a jarring note to the picture's early scenes; later, as one of the ladies steals a bottle of wine, she is rescued from the vengeful shopgirl by a member of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is a comic scene, to be sure, made terrifying by Sonia Saviange's repeating, at the scene's end, "I am an alcoholic" in the middle of the street as the camera pulls away from her. As a real French social problem, alcoholism comes to represent for **Femmes Femmes** certain bitter facts of life which start to conflict with its forced, theatrical gaiety.

By contrast to **Femmes Femmes**'s basically apolitical aestheticism, **Les Doigts dans la tête** by Jacques Doillon reflects the politicization of the French film scene. It comes directly out of a line of socially critical realism that goes back to Italian neo-realism and beyond, the revival of which some French critics have seen as one of the most noteworthy trends in their country's cinema today. François Truffaut (though hardly a leftist figure himself) has compared the movie to Jean Renoir's **Toni**, praising its natural, Renoir-like integration of political observation into a whole, humanistic framework.

Again the setting is largely an enclosed apartment, this time a single maid's room. The characters are now young, working class, and rather without ambition. The story is simple: indeed, very little happens. A young Swedish seventeen-year-old, Liv (Ann Zacharias), shacks up for several weeks with a baker's apprentice, Chris (Christophe Soto), who, with the help of the union, is in the process of settling some disagreements with his boss. In the course of the movie Chris's former girl friend, Rosette (Roselyne Villaumé), and his best friend, Léon (Olivier Bousquet), move in as well, with the resultant tensions resolved by the Swedish girl's inevitable departure and our hero's permanent loss of Rosette. Doillon's film immerses itself in a very real social situation: the problem of working class youths too adrift and nonconformist to take their place in the repressive social structures of the past, yet neither gifted, aspiring nor motivated enough to find a

satisfying personal alternative.

The strength of the story is in the telling, however. **Les Doigts dans la tête** is a film for its actors, and the young performers it presents are all but totally lacking in amateurish awkwardness, despite their status as relative unknowns. Doillon's portrayal of suburban Paris is of incredible bleakness: even the daytime scenes seem to have been shot at night. The 16mm black and white photography (quite successfully blown up to 35mm) avoids any artificial moodiness, even while it emphasizes the picture's dull, shadowy, indefinite world. Truffaut has compared Doillon's austere visual style to that of Bresson, and the observation fits nicely, for the young director shares with Bresson not only the same rigorousness, but also, more importantly, the same quality of effacing the physical concreteness of environments, of presenting characters in a paradoxically very real physical limbo.

Politically, **Les Doigts dans la tête** is discreet and ambiguous. Indeed, one suspects that the boss's complaints against Chris may be more justified than the other way around, which only strengthens the movie's essential, classic argument — that the impersonality of industrial life is dehumanizing, that laziness and rebellion may be the only sane solutions. There is little romanticizing of its people: they are self-centered and inconsiderate, if basically decent. As an attempt to link *cinéma-vérité* spontaneity with a definite, preconceived structure and style, and in its avoidance of commercialism, it represents a praiseworthy attempt at alternative cinema. Yet there are limitations involved. This type of realistic filmmaking may still be on the upswing, but the French cinema has been turning out similar, if basically fine, films about the working class since at least the mid-60s. (Examples: Edouard Luntz's **Les Coeurs Verts** or Maurice Pialat's **L'Enfance Nue**, to name only two that have been seen in Canada and the U.S.) **Les Doigts dans la tête** is a well-achieved film, and its director certainly promising, but it rarely rises above being a particularly excellent, good example of a rather well-defined style. It is hardly an early clue to a new direction, and the fact that Truffaut must define it in terms of Renoir and Bresson shows the work for what it must be considered — a calculated, if creditable blend of these two lines in the French film tradition.

Unhappily, though not surprisingly, not every young director shows quite the promise of a Vecchiali or a Doillon. **Le Voyage d'Amélie**, a first feature by Daniel Duval, shows the same preoccupation with aimless young men in a proletarian setting of suburban Paris, and while Duval's aims are undeniably comic, his achievements are neither funny nor sociologically telling. **Le Voyage d'Amélie** takes a rich situation — five young punks who happen to have a van are hired by an old widow to transport her recently deceased husband's body to the small town where she wants him buried. Duval's idea of humor, unfortunately, is to have one of the idiots use the radiator water to cook some resultantly inedible macaroni, and to use that gag as a lead in to a subsequent one where the van breaks down.

> An actor should never ask stupid questions about a character's psychology. Nobody cares what a character thinks, only what he says or does. Directors are annoyed by these questions, because they have to think up some intelligent-sounding answer instead of getting on with the work at hand.
>
> — Jean-Pierre Léaud

Although much of the humor is based on stealing (gas, when they run out of it; a chicken, when the group gets hungry), the film's proletarian context is completely artificial. There is nothing in the film that could not be done by five middle class young men, for example, nothing more than implicitly related to the materialist realities in which so much of the new French output is rooted. It is a false modesty. Duval reduces his realism to so much stylistic mannerism. Even on this level of style, the movie appears as sub-grade Lelouch in one of his less elaborate moods, especially in a scene where Duval shows his heroes frolicking lyrically in the mud — in slow motion. Amazingly, **Le Voyage d'Amélie** has been respectfully received by even many of the more highbrow French critics. One is hard put to say why, but there is cause in this fact to await, not with great eagerness perhaps, a second feature by this young director.

George Lellis

Coffee, Brandy & Cigars

Did you know that the white flag flying from the mast of the cruiser *Potemkin* in Eisenstein's film, to which the mother points after the sailors' mutiny, showing it to her little boy, is not a white flag but a flag left white so it could be hand-tinted red? In Russia that's how the film was shown, as per the instructions of Eisenstein. The sudden burst of color in the otherwise black-and-white film became highly dramatic, aesthetically and ideologically at the same time.

But the Russians had no idea what Eisenstein had accomplished. After the first private screening of the film, the Sovkino report only said, "Could probably be used as a good propaganda film. Suitable for workers' clubs." The poet, Mayakovsky, told them what they had.

An excellent book, *Cinema in Revolution*, edited by Luda and Jean Schnitzer and Marcel Martin and translated by David Robinson, is now available in paperback at $3.95 from Hill & Wang, New York. Jay Leyda's annotated three scripts of Eisenstein (**Potemkin**, **October** and **Alexander Nevsky**) is fascinating for its revelations and doubly recommended (paperback, $4.95, Harper & Row). Both are well illustrated, too.

Undercover agents of the Belgian underground, near the end of World War II, came out of their ambush to greet advancing American troops, and more than anything else wanted to know where they could see Chaplin's **The Great Dictator**, about which they'd heard so much.

In Eisenstein's script for **Potemkin**, when the guards, called out to shoot a band of the mutinous sailors, refuse suddenly to do so, the following passage occurs:

> *The guards abruptly lower their rifles*
> *Dolphins leaping....*

Eisenstein knew that to the ancient Greeks the dolphin was not only sacred but a symbol of happiness.

Ivor Montagu says that **Greed** is not so much about greed as it is about poverty and the effect this has on people with little money, "derailed" by a sudden windfall. True, but if poor people can be greedy, the rich can be greedy, too, — heavens how they can be! Take the case of the Harold Lloyd estate, Greenacres, so lyrically described in a recent *N.Y. Times* article on the eve of its being placed on the auction block because no one wanted to keep it up as a souvenir of Hollywood ecstacy in the days of its florescence. Not one of the major American film companies who are making such vast sums of money out of junk like **The Exorcist**, **Jaws**, **The Towering Inferno**, **Earthquake**, etc. was willing to put up a dime to save it. And so the trustees of the Harold Lloyd Foundation (the hypocrisy of titles — "trustees", indeed!) voted unanimously to sell it to a retired Iranian importer. Harold Lloyd's grand-daughter, Suzanne Lloyd Guasti, had fought to save the estate, saying, after she reluctantly voted "yes with reservations": "This is one of the biggest crimes in the motion picture industry, to let this house go." The 15 acres will be mostly cut up into lots for real-estate purposes.

Rouben Mamoulian, who made those fine films, **Applause**, **City Streets**, **Love Me Tonight** and **The Gay Desperado**, said recently, "The dying Rome offered bread and circuses. We offer welfare and porno-

George Lellis has been living in Paris, researching a dissertation on French film criticism for the University of Texas at Austin. His writings have appeared both in Take One *and several other film periodicals.*

graphy. Is that it, then? Is that all of it? The irony is that censorship in the early days led us to indirect statements that were more subtle and potent than they were obvious. With the new "freedom", we retreated atavistically to the trees. The supreme irony is the so-called "mature" film, which turns out to be merely an exhibition of sexual gymnastics... It is sad and crazy, and one day again there must be films that men can be proud of."

Something has happened generally to the arts that has changed them for the worse — movies and the theatre are only in the forefront. "Show business has changed," said Jack Benny, shortly before his death, "... there's no more class in show business."

That's just it with the new films, too, whether they call themselves **Nashville**, **The Day of the Locust**, **Shampoo** or **Tommy**. Whatever they have, they're alike in one respect — no class.

One of the rare films I was able to praise in this column recently, Bresson's **Lancelot of the Lake**, did such terrible business that following its one-week first run it disappeared and has not been exhibited in the New York area since. It's always like that. Van Gogh didn't sell a single canvas during his lifetime, either.

Harry Carr, who wrote **The Wedding March** with Stroheim, said of the complete **Greed**, which he saw, "Episodes

> I think I have consideration for other people, and I don't want to be called a goddam leftist because I have consideration for somebody else.
>
> — John Wayne

come along that you think have no bearing on the plot, then twelve or fourteen reels later it hits you with a crash."

"The perception of beauty is a moral test," said Thoreau. Think about that — it's a profound utterance by the simplest of men.

I saw some documentaries recently by DeeDee Halleck: **Jaroslava**, about that most human of endeavors, the baking of bread; **Mr. Story** (with the collaboration of Anita Thacher) about an old man speaking his mind; and **Meadow's Green** (with George Griffin) about a circus put on by the Bread and Puppet Theatre troupe. This attractive young filmmaker, Miss Halleck, who makes such attractive films, is that *rara avis* among present-day filmmakers, utterly devoid of pretentiousness and guile, and the three films I saw (though I expect to see more) are perfectly charming. I haven't used that adjective in so long that I've forgotten when I last used it to describe a film. I look forward to King Vidor's documentary on Andrew Wyeth, too, with the same eagerness that I do to more of Miss Halleck's work. And I'll then have more to say about them.

Finally, I'd like to pose the thought that in no other medium than in writing about the movies can one get away with such illiteracy (there's really no other word for it). Editors publishing such stuff, and knowing even less than their writers, make it a case of the blind leading the blind. Well, then, take the case of the Ph.D. student who in discussing the "forward" (his spelling, by the way) of my book, *The Complete* ***Wedding March***, after reading some 30,000 words of an ode to the film (which *The Washington Post* called "so rapturous as to border almost on the mystical...") says that nowhere in it do I say whether I like the film or not, whether I think it a good film or not. The Ph.D. (which is more than the film's director, von Stroheim, ever achieved) is a Ph.D. in film, no less. It reminds me of how Mencken defined an archbishop — as an ecclesiast with a rank higher than that attained by Christ.

Herman G. Weinberg

Herman G. Weinberg has contributed articles to most of the world's leading film journals, served on the juries of various film festivals, been U.S. correspondent for Sight & Sound *as well as* Cahiers du Cinéma *and published several books on the cinema, the most recent of which is* The Complete Wedding March *(Little, Brown).*

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ROBERT B. HAAS

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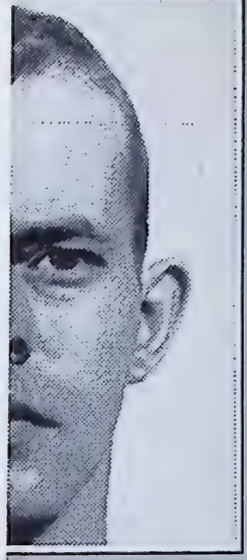

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One of the rare films I was able to praise in this column recently, Bresson's **Lancelot of the Lake**, did such terrible business that following its one-week first run it disappeared and has not been exhibited in the New York area since. It's always like that. Van Gogh didn't sell a single canvas during his lifetime, either.

Harry Carr, who wrote **The Wedding March** with Stroheim, said of the complete **Greed**, which he saw, "Episodes

> I think I have considera
> people, and I don't want
> goddam leftist because I
> eration for somebody else

come along that you think ing on the plot, then twe reels later it hits you with a

"The perception of bea test," said Thoreau. Think it's a profound utterance by men.

I saw some documentai DeeDee Halleck: **Jarosla** most human of endeavors bread; **Mr. Story** (with the Anita Thacher) about an c ing his mind; and **Meadov** George Griffin) about a ci the Bread and Puppet T This attractive young fil Halleck, who makes such is that *rara avis* amon filmmakers, utterly devoid ness and guile, and the th (though I expect to see mo ly charming. I haven't us tive in so long that I've I last used it to describe

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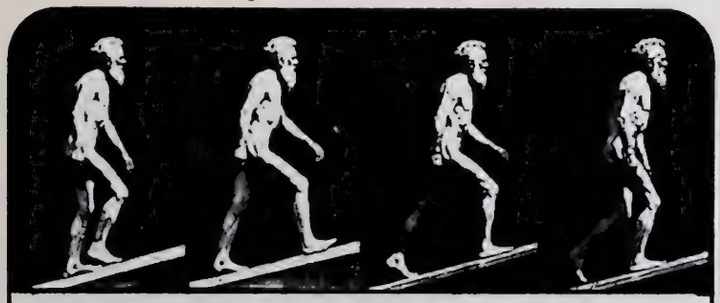

Muybridge
Man in Motion
ROBERT B. HAAS

The "godfather of moving pictures," Eadweard Muybridge was a more complex and mysterious man than appears in film histories. His experiments led to extensive documentation of movement in animals and humans. But this work was only a small part of his career. An eminent still photographer, he shot the "official" photos of the Modoc Indian War. Haas traces Muybridge's family origins, untangles different versions of his work for Leland Stanford, and recounts the sensational events surrounding his trial for the murder of his beautiful young wife's lover.

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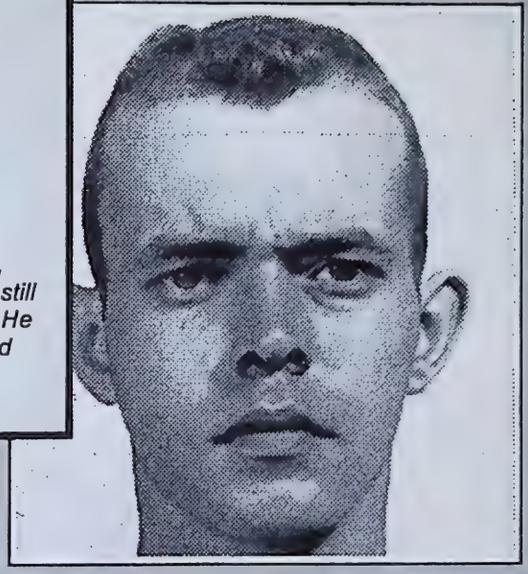
The Pros and Con of Take One

Big-time critic though he may be, TAKE ONE columnist Jay Cocks still prefers we not publish his photo. He asked friend Chuck Jones to send along this drawing of namesake Michigan J. Frog instead.

The pros: super-knowledgeable contributors like critics Jay Cocks and Herman Weinberg, filmmakers Gideon Bachmann, David Helpern, Joe Adamson and Bob Cowan — people whose lives revolve around the creation of film.



TAKE ONE contributor Albert Nussbaum back in 1962, when the FBI was looking for him. They described him as "an intelligent young man" and "an avid chess player" with an "engaging smile".

The con: Albert Nussbaum, #81332-132, United States Penitentiary, Marion, Illinois.

A writer of some distinction, Nussbaum's stories have been anthologized in three Mystery Writers of America annuals and many other collections. Unhappily for him, however, Nussbaum made, as he phrases it "... several unauthorized withdrawals from federally insured banks..."

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BOOK NEWS

The John Robert Colombo poems in this issue (pages 14 and 15) are from two recently-published volumes: *Translations from the English* (a collection of found poetry) and *The Sad Truths* (mostly non-found poems). *Take One* readers will probably find the latter volume of particular interest — it is illustrated with five pen-and-ink drawings by animator Norman McLaren and also contains a long poem about Kasper Hauser, more recently the subject of a film by Werner Herzog. Both volumes of poetry were published simultaneously by Peter Martin Associates, 35 Britain Street Toronto ($8.95 H, $3.95 P).

A paperback edition of Penelope Mortimer's celebrated *The Pumpkin Eater* (the film version of which starred Anne Bancroft) will at last be available in the States (in Canada, it has long been on the Penguin list). The $4 softcover is from Daughters, Inc., Plainfield, Vermont 05667.

Universal has obtained film rights to Harold Robbins' next novel, *The Lonely Lady*, due to be published this spring.

REVIEWS

Day for Night, by François Truffaut, Jean-Louis Richard, and Suzanne Schiffman. Grove Press 1975. 175 pp. $3.95 (In Canada: Random, $4.50)
The Films of My Life, by François Truffaut. Flammarion (Paris) 1975. 360 pp. $13.40

Two current books document the life-long love affair François Truffaut has had with the movies. One volume is the screenplay, in final treatment, of **La Nuit Américaine (Day for Night)**, the filmmaker's 1973 work of understated brilliance. The script is translated by Sam Flores, whose homework is really solid: not only does Flores render an acute, line-by-line translation (often at variance with the movie's U.S. subtitled version), he provides, in addition, historical, biographical, and behind-the-scenes data.

As filmmaker, Truffaut's abiding strengths have been a poetic spirit conjoined with humanistic principles. Both qualities are transmitted in the text. The book itself is attractively packaged, abounding with photo reproductions in crisp, high-contrast black and white. In design and layout, it's just about the most handsome published screenplay ever. (Grove Press, a vanguard in the film-into-print format, has outdone itself.)

For everyone who has seen **Day for Night**, the script, as presented here, works its beguiling spell all over again. More nice news: the price is right; ***Day for Night*** is the softback bargain of the year.

The Films of My Life, a Flammarion import, may not be bargain stuff, but it stands as further testament to Truffaut's passion. Cinema as lifework is what it represents, this collection of the director's critical writings (ca. 1954-1974).

*Auteur*ism, of course, ruled his journalistic career. In the Fifties, Truffaut kept *Cahiers du Cinéma* and the now-defunct *Arts et Spectacles* brimful of paeans to cherished film artists. Viewed in retrospect, these essays transcend the limited parameters of many *auteur* critics, indeed of most reviewers of any stripe. Predictably, Truffaut displays genuine taste and credibility as a critic. To proffer the highest recommendation: his insights on cinema, as art and industry, rank with those of his mentor, the late André Bazin.

Truffaut's remarks are often controversial (the eulogy of Hollywood's Poverty Row and damnation of the French "Tradition of Quality" alone will make for hot debate wherever movie lore is traded), but his arguments are energizing and entertaining. ***The Films of My Life*** (perfect title) is a deeply satisfying anthology.

Joe Blades

Kings of the Bs: Working Within the Hollywood System, Todd McCarthy and Charles Flynn, eds. Dutton 1975. $12.50 (H), $6.95 (P) (In Canada: Clarke, Irwin, $15.00, $8.35)

B-movie appreciation is a world unto itself. After a late night cheapie my friends and I will stay up sometimes until 3 a.m. qualifying the talents of directors we're particularly keen on: Roger Corman, Jack Arnold, Roy William Neill, Andre de Toth, Don Sharp, William Castle. How does an Arkoff-Nicholson produced film differ from a Herman Cohen or a Michael Carreras? At what point can you distinguish shoddiness from a budget-instigated directorial flourish?

There is a peculiar thrill in making distinctions at that hour of the morning: they have a small, hard quality analogous to the movie world we've just experienced. B-movies, with their restricted sets, foreshortened story-telling, and flat performances, deserve a footnote all their own in any discussion of functional beauty in the cinema.

Kings of the Bs, despite its A-picture price, should delight the devotees of the movies that used to make up the lower half of double bills. The writers that McCarthy and Flynn have compiled view their subject from all sides: students of bread-and-butter Hollywood, champions of underdog movies, and film encyclopedists can embrace this anthology with equal enthusiasm.

The first section of the book is a useful look at how these gems were produced and distributed. A business history of Republic, Monogram, AIP, and other studios accompanies a financial breakdown on individual films.

Following this is a collection of interpretative essays on various producers, directors, and films. Let me single out McCarthy's piece on Robert Altman's 1957 teenpic **The Delinquents** and Myron Meisel's eloquent defense of Ulmer's career as particularly good. Roger Ebert's inside view on Russ Meyer is interesting, but Meisel's article on Joseph H. Lewis is too close-up; it will require some late-night catching-up to fully appreciate.

Interviews make up the next section. Many of the producers repeat the same stories about the conditions under which they worked, but there are some weird individual tales as well. The marginal interest of Abbott and Costello comedies notwithstanding, I could have done without the Arthur Lubin interview; someone like Jack Arnold would have been more valuable.

The book concludes with a filmography, compiled by McCarthy, of 325 American directors. Some, like Robson and Dmytryk, have careers of principally A production but it's good to see them included here since they are missing from Sarris's *American Cinema*. This section prompts a question: just how valuable is extended research into B-movies? If I were to add to the list that McCarthy has compiled the names of Albert Band (**Face of Fire**, 59) or Jack Sher (**Love in a Goldfish Bowl**, 61) or Edward Griffith, Harry Beaumont, Ray Nazarro — the list could go on —

would this be as worthwhile as attempting a further analysis of John Ford (as Sarris is doing presently) or sorting out Robert Altman's career? The question ought to be asked. And while I'm at it, what about research into British Bs? The supposed anonymity of British movies should not deter us from investigations of Cy Enfield, Val Guest, Roy Ward Baker, and Don Chaffey, just to name a few.

That diversion aside, ***Kings of the Bs*** is a welcome reply to Henri Langlois's plea that every film deserves its screening and evaluation.

Howard Curle

Notes for a Life, by Bryan Forbes. Collins 1975, 384 pp. $13.95

No-one expects modesty in a film-director's memoirs, but if Bryan Forbes's autobiography doesn't display the monster ego of *Fun in a Chinese Laundry* or *The Name Above the Title*, it's only because — to paraphrase Churchill, one of the book's supporting cast — Forbes has a great deal to be modest about. Considering that he is under fifty and has directed only ten films, why did he bother? Simple; time has shown up the mediocrity of his films, and the box-office disaster of **The Whisperers**, **Deadfall** and **The Madwoman of Chaillot** put his career into limbo. *Notes for a Life* — the pompous title tells all, I fear — is merely Forbes's latest effort to save an inflated and flagging reputation.

Padding things out, Forbes gives us a lot about his pre-films life; once fame and fortune come his way, it's the same old routine, with anecdotes about the famous (that are neither funny nor wise) crowding every page, or seeming to. Yet again, we learn that Katharine Hepburn and Edith Evans are tremendously talented, formidably eccentric and really terribly nice; that Hollywood is full of philistine rat-racers; that fine films can fail at the box-office due to being ahead of their time. There is some acrimony — José Ferrer is sniped at — and a lot of condescension and false modesty, the worst examples respectively being his accounts of working with Alan Ladd and his first marriage. There is no account, however, of Forbes's catastrophic two years as production chief of EMI-MGM, which failed to save his career and kept him away from films for four years.

The book has some odd mistakes. It may be a simple misprint that the name of Forbes's designer, Ray Simm, is given as Ray Simon. It's unimportant that Forbes thinks Ingrid Bergman was in **Going My Way** or that Lady Bracknell is a character in *Lady Windermere's Fan*. But his fulsome eulogy to that great French movie, **La** (sic) **Fin du Jour**, which presumably refers to **Le Jour se Lève**, is more disturbing — did no-one check the proofs, or didn't Forbes know anyway? Certainly, no filmbuff will have

Howard Curle is a Winnipeg-based critic and writer.

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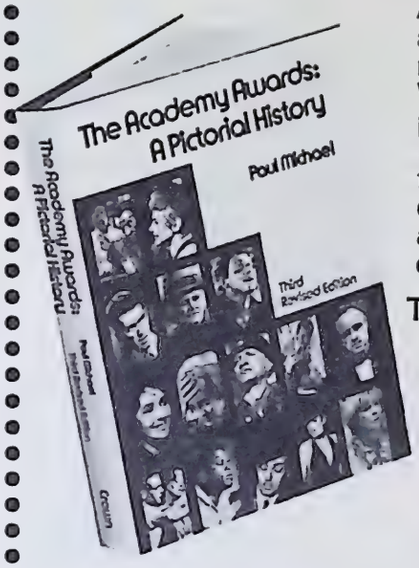

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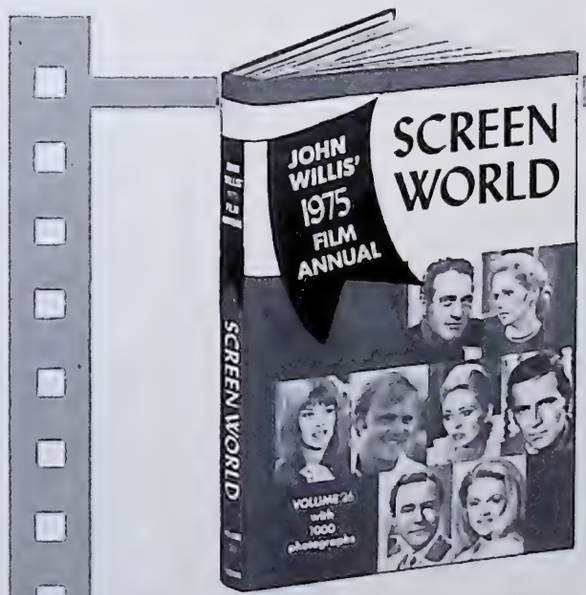

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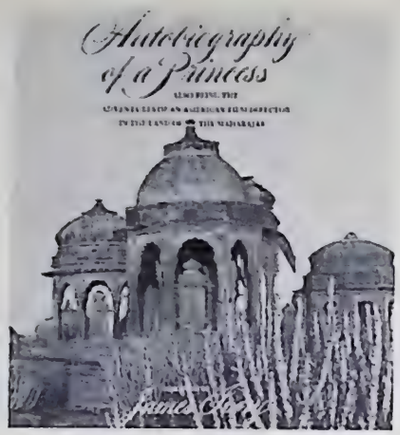

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any respect for his views by book's end. One is left with the inescapable conclusion that films in Britain are dominated by bonhomous middle-class bores whose chief enthusiasms lie with the house in suburbia, the 2½ children and the football match on the telly. For Forbes, the British cinema means not Ken Russell or Nicolas Roeg or John Boorman, but "Johnny" Mills, "Bunter" Attenborough and, of course, himself, the great "Forbesy" Forbes. However, these three have all worked a lot less than Roeg or Russell or Boorman in the last few years, so perhaps ***Notes For a Life*** isn't about the death of films in Britain after all. Perhaps Forbes will stick to selling books in picturesque Virginia Water, coming back to films only to make the occasional absurd commercial for the Tory Party (his level, I'm bound to say); perhaps there is a God, after all.

Pierre Greenfield

The Philosophy of Andy Warhol (From A to B and Back Again), by Andy Warhol. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 1975. 241 pp. $7.95 (In Canada: Longman, $9.50)

It's been a long time since I thought about Andy Warhol. **Frankenstein** and **Blood of Dracula** seem a long way from **Chelsea Girls** and **Bike Boy**; *Interview* is a shadow of its former self, with faggy/dumb pictures of women and upper case letters; Joe Dallesandro's gone off into another world on his stumpy legs, talking revolution and hitting the girls; Bob Colacello. Nobody I know has anything to say about Warhol, except occasionally that he does the best interviews in *Interview*.

Andy Warhol wears regular Levi jeans, Brooks Brothers shirts and ties, YSL safari jackets, and Jockey Classic Briefs from Macy's. He's Catholic and everyone who works with him is Catholic. He doesn't say that in this book. He doesn't like anyone to touch him.

If you didn't know anything about Andy Warhol you could find out a lot by reading this book. He talks about his youth, dreams, friends, dog, art, beauty secrets; about hairdressers, smells, the Rothschild money-folding technique, stars, fame, portraits/poptarts — everything. Enough taped conversations to satisfy anyone's lust for details. And lots that seems written, maybe thanks to the editor. Some extended THOUGHTS. Bob Colacello.

A writes about Art as Business. Says good art now is to make money in business. Logical extension of pop art, as David Hamilton said way back then. No, Andy Warhol is not LEFT WING, despite Rainer Crone's claims in *Andy Warhol* (Praeger, 1971). His irony doesn't function in that way anymore. He's concerned with individuals and celebrities and business as art. Yet he likes America because rich people can't drink better Cokes or watch better TV shows than poor people and President Eisenhower bought Queen Elizabeth a hotdog. And his work makes a history of the sixties without rock and roll. That may be his weakest point, but don't forget he's nearly fifty.

He's candid in this book but hard to pin down. Key may be emotions and his lack of them and willingness to be filled up with other people's (for instance asking, is this exciting? are we having a good time?). He tells a funny story about living with lots of roommates and finding himself without problems but filling up with theirs so he goes to a psychiatrist to find problems of his own. The shrink said he'd phone A back but never did, so A bought a TV set and since that day never thought again about problems, his own or anybody's. Loneliness and machines (everythingmats) and absence of reflection though lots of recollection. Refers to his taperecorder as his wife.

He mentions Canada: "If you lived in Canada you might have a million trees making oxygen for you alone, so each of those trees isn't working that hard. Whereas a tree in a treepot in Times Square has to make oxygen for a million people. In New York you really do have to hustle, and the trees know this, too — just look at them." That's it. The only quote I'm quoting, although this book is made for quoting.

It's quite a satisfying book that way. Flip through and you'll find lots of funny and even witty and usually smart things. The style is very flat — recording, you know: he said she said, no adverbs or metaphors — so it's better to read it in bits and fits. That's the way it's written.

Lastly, he's horrible about women. The chapter called "Love (Prime)" about Taxi, the fall and rise of his favourite sixties girl, is chilling. Chilling.

Kay Armatage

Pierre Greenfield is the only person writing for Take One *that lives in Haverford West, Wales.*

Kay Armatage, a Take One *Contributing Editor, lives in Toronto and is making a movie about Jill Johnston.*

BOOKS ON FILM: A CHECKLIST

This column lists new books, whether hardcover (H) or paperback (P), dealing in whole or in part with the motion picture and issued, for the most part, in the English language by North American publishers; also new editions of out-of-print titles, and novels the significance of which transcends their fictional format. Canadian agents and prices, where differing from U.S. publisher and price, are noted in brackets as much as possible, but the listings of Canadian agencies may be particularly incomplete this issue — bear with us. (In some cases, Canadian agencies don't find out until the last minute whether or not they'll be importing a book, or at what price.) All mass market

— *cont. on page 50*

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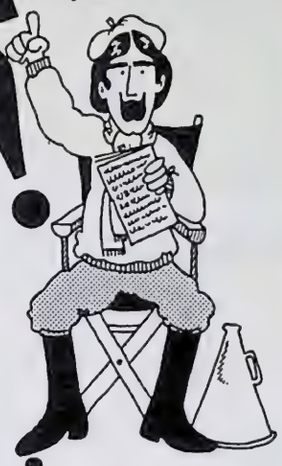
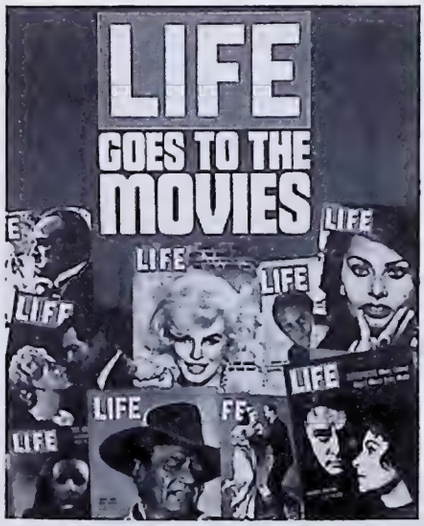


LIFE Goes to the Movies

A Night in Casablanca, The Great Dictator, Mutiny on the Bounty, Quo Vadis, Dr. Zhivago, Cleopatra, For Whom The Bell Tolls, Lifeboat, Thief of Baghdad, Exodus, High Noon, Bonnie and Clyde . . . and that's just the beginning.



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Academy Awards Oscar Annual 1975. By Robert Osborne. ESE-California (509 N. Harbor Blvd., La Habra, CA 90631) 1975. unp. $7.95 (H). A recap of the latest Awards and a roster of previous winners.

America in the Movies. By Michael Wood. Basic Books 1975. 206 pp. $10.00 (H). (General, $11.00). The U.S., as it is portrayed in its films.

Sarah Bernhard. By William Emboden. Macmillan 1975. 176 pp. $12.95 (H). Chapter on screen career of actress.

Betty Boop. By Max Fleischer. Avon 1975. unp. $2.95 (P). (3.45). Strips of the old cartoon character.

Bogart and Bacall. By Joe Hyams. McKay 1975. 245 pp. $9.95 (H). (Musson, $11.50)

Bronson! By W.A. Harbinson. Pinnacle 1975. 164 pp. $1.50 (P).

The Carol Burnett Story. By George Carpozi Jr. Warner 1975. 206 pp. $1.50 (P).

CBS: Reflections in a Bloodshot Eye. By Robert Metz. Playboy 1975. 448 pp. $13.50 (H). (Musson, $15.50). A study of the communications giant.

Cher! By Vicki Pellegrino. Ballantine 1975. 110 pp. $1.50 (P).

Cinema: The Magic Vehicle. By Adam Garbicz and Jacek Klinowski. Scarecrow 1975. 551 pp. $18.50 (H). Critical analyses of 448 outstanding films 1913-1949.

The Complete Life Story of Susan Hayward ... Immortal Screen Star. By Doug McClelland. Pinnacle 1975. 214 pp. $1.50 (P). Revised and expanded edition of McClelland's earlier *Susan Hayward The Divine Bitch.*

Creators of Life: A History of Animation. By Donald Heraldson. Drake 1975. 298 pp. $14.95 (H). (General, $17.25).

Directors and Directions. By John Russell Taylor. Hill & Wang 1975. 327 pp. $11.95 (H), $5.95 (P). Study of Chabrol, Pasolini, Anderson, Kubrick, Warhol, Ray, Jancso and Makavejev.

Does She ... Or Doesn't She? (And How She Did It). By Shirley Polykoff. Doubleday 1975. 131 pp. $6.95 (H). Autobiography of an ad person's work in the media, incl. tv commercials.

Every Day's a Matinee. By Max Wilk. Norton 1975. 288 pp. $8.50 (H). Remembrances of film and other entertainment media.

Filmed Books and Plays 1926-1964. By A.G.S. Enser. Academic Press 1975. 549 pp. $24.00 (H). A list.

Filmguide to Eight-and-Half. By Ted Perry. Indiana U. Press 1975. 89 pp. $6.95 (H), $1.95 (P).

Flashback: Films and History. G.S. Metraux, ed. Unesco 1975. 256 pp. $7.00 (P). A symposium in *Cultures*, Vol. II No. 1.

Guide to College Courses in Film and Television. Sam L. Grogg Jr., ed. Acropolis/AFI 1975. 298 pp. $6.95 (P).

Hail, Columbia. By Rochelle Larkin. Arlington 1975. 445 pp. $17.95 (H). A history of the studio.

Handbook of Basic Motion Picture Techniques. By Emil E. Brodbeck. Amphoto/Prentice-Hall 1975. 268 pp. $10.95 (H). ($12.95). Revised edition of a classic text.

The Horse, The Gun and The Piece of Property. By Ralph Brauer, with Donna Brauer. Bowling Green U. Popular Press 1975. 246 pp. $10.00 (H), $4.00 (P). Changing images of the tv Western.

International Index to Film Periodicals, 1974. Karen Jones, ed. St. Martin's 1975. 533 pp. $27.50 (H). (Collier-MacMillan). Third annual compilation by the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF).

The Jaws Log. By Carl Gottlieb. Dell 1975. 220 pp. $1.50 (P). What allegedly happened during the shooting of the film.

Judy. By Gerold Frank. Harper & Row 1975. 672 pp. $12.50 (H). (Fitz. & White., $14.50). All you'll ever want to know about La Garland.

King of Comedy. By Mack Sennett, as told to Cameron Shipp. Pinnacle 1975. 284 pp. $1.75 (P). Paperback edition of out-of-print 1954 biography.

Love Goddesses of the Movies. By Roger Manvell. Crescent/Crown 1975. 176 pp. $5.98 (H).

The Making of King Kong. By Orville Goldner and George E. Turner. Barnes

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From silent era Stepin Fetchits to "Blaxploitation" Superflys, the story of the black in films is a study in social history. This authoritative new book vividly shows how this ever-changing screen stereotype has served as a grim metaphor for modern American blacks. More than 80 illustrations and photos are included, many of them never before reproduced.

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1975. 271 pp. $17.50 (H). (Smithers & Bonellie, $24.50).

The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance. By Nancy Warfield. Cinemabilia 1975. 28 pp. $4.95 (P). A study of John Ford's film.

Marilyn: The Last Months. By Eunice Murray, with Rose Shade. Pyramid 1975. 157 pp. $1.75 (P). Final period of Monroe's life, by her housekeeper.

The Movie Musical from Vitaphone to 42nd Street. Miles Kreuger, ed. Dover 1975. 378 pp. $6.95 (P). (General, $7.95). Feature articles and reviews of musicals as originally published in *Photoplay* 1926-33.

Paul Newman. By Charles Hamblett. Regnery 1975. 232 pp. $8.95 (H).

Jack Nicholson: The Search for a Superstar. By Norman Dickens. Signet 1975. 182 pp. $1.50 (P).

On Location ... on Martha's Vineyard: The Making of the Movie Jaws. By Edith Blake. Lower Cape Publ. (Box 901, Orleans, MA 02653) 1975. 133 pp. $5.00 (P); also Ballantine 1975. 181 pp. $1.50 (P).

Over My Shoulder. By Jessie Matthews. Arlington 1975. 240 pp. $8.95 (H). (Palm). Autobiography of the British stage and screen star.

Sam Peckinpah: Master of Violence. By Max Evans. Dakota Press 1972. 100 pp. $4.95 (H). Mainly about the filming of **The Ballad of Cable Hogue.**

The Philosophy of Andy Warhol (From A to B and Back Again). By Andy Warhol. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich 1975. 241 pp. $7.95 (H). (Longman, $9.50). Musings of the avant-garde filmmaker.

A Pictorial History of Sex in the Movies. By Jeremy Pascall and Clyde Jeavons. Hamlyn 1975. 217 pp. $17.95 (H). ($7.95 — *sic.*)

Propaganda on Film: A Nation at War. By Richard A. Maynard. Hayden 1975. 152 pp. $4.06 (P).

Jean Renoir. By Penelope Gilliatt. McGraw-Hill 1975. 136 pp. $5.95 (H), $2.95 (P). ($3.50 (P)). Essays, conversations, reviews.

Sexuality in the Movies. Thomas R. Atkins, ed. Indiana U. Press 1975. 244 pp. $12.50 (H).

Sixguns and Society. By Bill Wright. U. of California 1975. 217 pp. $10.00 (H). A structuralist study of the Western.

Super 8mm Movie Making Simplified. By Myron A. Matzkin. Amphoto 1975. 96 pp. $3.45 (P). (Prentice-Hall, $12.25 (H)).

Three Films. By Roman Polanski. Harper & Row 1975. 214 pp. $8.50 (H), $4.95 (P). (Fitz. & White., $10.95, $5.50). Scripts of **Cul-de-Sac, Repulsion, Knife in the Water.**

Toward a Film Humanism. By Neil P. Hurley. Dell 1975. 222 pp. $2.45 (P). A reprint of Hurley's 1970 *Theology Through Film.*

The Western. By Allen Eyles. Barnes 1975. 208 pp. $8.95 (H). (Smithers & Bonellie, $12.50). Updated edition of 1967 book.

The World I Live In. By George Jessel, with John Austin. Regnery 1975. 213 pp. $8.95 (H). Memoirs.

You Must Remember This. By Walter Wagner. Putnam 1975. 320 pp. $8.95 (H). Reminiscences by Hollywood old-timers.

George L. George

George L. George, for many years a film director, with an Academy Award for one of his documentaries, is a book reviewer for several film magazines.

Update: FILM
How and Where to Find Out What You Want to Know

Additions:

1A.

Oxford Companion to Film. ed. Liz-Anne Bawden. New York and London. Oxford University Press. 1976. 742 pp. $29.95. Eight years in production, eight color illustrations, 90 half-tones, covering 700 films, biographies, histories, analyses of movements, versions of literary classics, technical processes, etc.

3A.

Forthcoming: **Film Book Series:** Vol. I: Directors, Vol. II: Screenwriters and Producers, Vol. III: Technicians, Vol. IV: Actors. London: Saint James Press, New York: Saint Martin's Press. Scheduled for 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979.

14A.

Literature of the Film. Alan Dyment. London: White Lion Pub. 1975. £15.

18.

International Index to Film Periodicals. Vol. III: 1974. ed. Karen Jones. 517 pp. London: St. James Press; New York: St. Martin's Press. 1975. $27.50.

24.

Film Literature Index is edited by Vincent J. Aceto, Jane Graves, and Fred Silva.

25A.

Motion Picture Marketplace. New York: Little, Brown. 1975.

27A.

A Biographical Dictionary of the Cinema. David Thomson. London: Secker and Warburg. 1975.

Corrections:

Movie magazine is *not* defunct. Issue 20 was published this summer in a smaller format but just as elegantly produced. **Movie** hopes, with the aid of financial assistance from the BFI and new subscriptions, to publish on a quarterly basis. Number 21 was scheduled for the fall. Subscriptions and individual copies are available from 25 Lloyd Baker Street, London WC1X 9AT. ... **Film Critic** also intends to emerge from limbo this fall. ... **Film Facts** is not three but only two years behind current release schedules. ... The AFI is publishing a new magazine: **American Film**, a monthly under the editorship of Hollis Alpert. ... **Quarterly Review of Film Studies** begins publication in February, edited by Ronald Gottesman and Michael Silverman, available from Redgrave Publishing Company, Pleasantville, New York. One year: $14.

Film Book Bibliography:

Nelson, Abigail. "Guide to Indexes of Periodical Literature on Film," *University Film Study Center Newsletter.*6:1 (October 1975). A comparative table of five indexes.

Staples, Donald E. and Donald Walker. "The Reference Shelf: Film Literature Indexes Reviewed," *Sightlines* (Summer 1975).

Additional Publishers Addresses:

Secker and Warburg (27A)
14 Carlisle Street, Soho Square
London W1V 6NN

Saint James Press (3A, 18)
1 Montagu Mews North
London W1H 1AJ

Saint Martin's Press (3A, 18)
175 Fifth Avenue
New York 10010

White Lion Publishers (14A)
138 Park Lane
London W1Y 3DD

Oxford University Press (1A)
200 Madison Avenue
New York 10016

INFO

BOOKER'S GUIDE TO SOURCES OF 16MM FILMS MENTIONED IN THIS ISSUE

All Fear Eats the Soul. US:NYF.
Animal Crackers. UNI.
Barbary Coast. CAN:BEL. US:SGS.
Battleship Potemkin. CAN:AST. US:MAB.
Ben. CAN:IFD. US:SWK.
Beyond the Valley of the Dolls. CAN:BEL. US:FI.
Blazing Saddles. WB.
The Boyfriend. CAN:BEL. US:FI.
Breakout. CAN:AST. US:SWK.
Breathless. CAN:AST. US:CMH.
Bringing Up Baby. CAN:AST. US:FI.
Bring Me the Head of Alfredo Garcia. UA.
The Brothers Rico. CAN:AST. US:TWF.
The Carey Treatment. CAN:BEL. US:FI.
Carnal Knowledge. CAN:BEL. US:FI.
The Chronicle of Anna Magdalena Bach. US:NYF.
Cocoanuts. UNI.
The Crazy World of Julius Vrooder. CAN:BEL. US:FI.
The Crowd Roars. UA.
The Day of the Locust. CAN:PAR. US:FI.
Duck Soup. UNI.
The Exorcist. WB.
Fig Leaves. US:FI.
Framed. CAN:PAR. US:FI.
The Getaway. CAN:WB. US:SWK.
Greed. US:FI.
Hard Contract. CAN:BEL. US:FI.
Hard Times. CAN:AST. US:SWK.
Hearts of the West. UA*
Hickey and Boggs. UA.
Kansas City Confidential. US:UA.
Key Witness. CAN:BEL. US:FI.
Kid Galahad. US:UA.
Lancelot du lac. CAN:CAR. US:NYF.
Lisztomania. WB*
Love and Anarchy. US:C5.
Mahler. CAN:SAG.
Major Dundee. CAN:AST. US:TWY.
Marne. WB.
The Man With the Movie Camera. CAN:CFI. US:MAB.
The Master Gunfighter. US:TLC.
The Music Lovers. UA.
Nashville. CAN:PAR. US:FI.
A Night at the Opera. CAN:BEL. US:FI.
A Night in Casablanca. US:IVY.
99 River Street. UA.
92 In the Shade. UA.
Only Angels Have Wings. CAN:AST. US:MAB.
Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid. CAN:BEL. US:FI.
The Phenix City Story. CAN:IFD. US:HCW.
Rancho Deluxe. UA.
Road to Glory. CAN:ITE. US:FI.
Scarface. UA?
The Seduction of Mimi. CAN:CAR. US:NLC.
The Silencers. CAN:AST. US:TWY
Sisters. CAN:AST. US:AIP.
Slither. CAN:BEL. US:FI.
Swept Away... US:C5.
Terminal Man. WB.
Tiger Shark. UA.
Tommy. CAN:AST. US:SWK.
Twentieth Century. CAN:AST. US:MAB.
Walking Tall. CAN:AMB. US:CIN.
The Yakuza. WB.
Zandy's Bride. WB.

Additions and Corrections
Bonnie & Clyde (Vol. 4 No. 10). US:SWK.
The Chase (4-11). US:SWK.
Mickey One (4-11). US:SWK.
Two Lane Blacktop (4-11). US:SWK.

* 16mm prints may not be currently available.

While based on sources we believe reliable and up-to-date, *Take One* cannot guarantee the accuracy of any of the above information, nor assume any liability for the results of any misinformation given. We will be happy to print additions and corrections in future issues.

AIP. American International Pictures, 9033 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, Cal. 90211.
AMB. Ambassador Films, 88 Eglinton Ave. East, Toronto M4P 1B8.
AST. Astral Films, 224 Davenport Rd., Toronto M5R 1J7
BEL. BelleVue Film Distributors, 227 Victoria Street, Toronto M5B 1B6.
C5. Cinema Five, 595 Madison Ave., New York N.Y. 10022.
CAR. Cine-Art Film Distributing, 1204 St. Catherine St. E., Montreal H2L 2G9.
CFI. Canadian Film Institute, 1762 Carling Ave., Ottawa K2A 2H7.
CIN. Cinerama Releasing, 141 So. Robertson Blvd., Los Angeles, Cal. 90048.
CMH. Contemporary Films/McGraw Hill, Princeton Road, Hightstown, N.J. 08520.
FI. Films Inc., 1144 Wilmette Ave., Wilmette, Ill. 60091.
HCW. Hurlock Cine World, 13 Arcadia Rd., Old Greenwich, Conn. 06870.
IFD. International Film Distributors, 20 Bloor St. W., Toronto M4W 1A1.
ITE. International Tele-Film, 47 Densley Ave., Toronto M6M 2P5.
IVY. Ivy Films, 165 W. 46th St., NYC 10022
MAB. MacMillan Audio Brandon, 34 MacQuesten Parkway S., Mount Vernon, N.Y. 10550.
NLC. New Line Cinema, 853 Broadway, NYC 10003.
NYF. New Yorker Films, 43 West 61st St., NYC 10023.
PAR. Paramount Pictures, Toronto Star Building, 1 Yonge St., Toronto M5E 1E9.
SAG. Saguenay Films, 102 Bloor St. W., Suite 570, Toronto M5S 1N1.
SGS. Sam Goldwyn Films, 1041 N. Formosa Ave., Los Angeles, Cal. 90046.
SWK. Swank Motion Pictures, 201 South Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, Mo. 63166.
TLC. Taylor-Laughlin Dist. Co., 9336 W. Washington Blvd., Culver City, Cal. 90230.
TWF. Trans-World Films Inc., 332 South Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill 60604.
TWY. Twyman Films, 329 Salem Ave., Dayton, Ohio 45401.
UA. United Artists Corp., Suite 800, 2180 Yonge St., Toronto M4S 2B9 and 729 7th Ave., NYC 10019.
UNI. Universal Films, 2450 Victoria Park Ave., Willowdale, Ont. M2J 4A1, and 445 Park Ave., NYC 10022.
WB. Warner Brothers Distributors, 70 Carlton St., Toronto M5B 1L7 and 400 Warner Blvd., Burbank, Cal. 91505.

SIXTEEN MILLIMETRE NEWS

U.S. non-theatrical rights have been awarded to rbc films (933 North la Brea Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. 90038; 213-874-5050) for the thirteen films produced for the first and second seasons of The American Film Theatre. The films (to be made available to campus and other non-theatrical audiences next fall) include: **The Iceman Cometh, Butley, A Delicate Balance, The Homecoming, Lost in the Stars, Luther, Rhinoceros, Three Sisters, Galileo, In Celebration, The Maids, The Man in the Glass Booth,** and **Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris.**

Green Mountain Post Films, a small film production co-op, has just completed and released an hour-long, color documentary called **Lovejoy's Nuclear War,** about the rebellion that takes place in one rural Massachusetts town when it suddenly finds it has been selected as the site for a mammoth atomic reactor complex. The film focuses on the ordinary citizen in confronting (through a dramatic act of civil disobedience) a massive and potentially catastrophic technology. You can write Green Mountain at Box 269, Montague, Mass. 01351, or call them at 413-863-4754 or 367-9374.

Joel Freedman's much-acclaimed, multiple-award-winner, **Broken Treaty at Battle Mountain** — about the struggle of Nevada's Shoshone Indians to keep 24 million acres of land originally promised to them by the U.S. government — is now being distributed in the U.S. by Soho Cinema Ltd., 225 Lafayette St., NYC 10012 (212-966-1416), and in Canada by New Cinema Enterprises, 35 Britain St., Toronto M5A 1R7 (416-862-1674).

Preservation Ventures Inc. (P.O. Box 22361, Denver, Colorado 80222; 303-757-7536 or 758-7149) has just completed, and is now distributing, two half-hour, color films in their "Vanishing Americana" series: **Steam Thrashermen** (about the steam engines that were used to harvest and thrash wheat in the late 19th and early 20th centuries), and **Finders and Seekers** (about gold prospecting). Both show real people, still actually making a living using fast-disappearing methods.

NEXT ISSUE

We throw some Day-light on Doris Kappelhoff, America's most mis-understood multi-million-dollar corporation. Plus, "I Made Movies...", a career interview with contract director Henry Hathaway.

CONFERENCES & COMPETITIONS

The **First International Craft Film Festival** (for 16mm films on any traditional or contemporary craft) has

been re-scheduled for January 23 through 25, with entry deadline now January 5. Entry forms and further information from New York State Craftsmen Inc., 27 West 53 St., NYC 10019 (212-586-0026).

Deadline is January 15 for entries in the sixth **International Festival of Short Films** in Tampere (16mm and 35mm films up to 35 minutes long). There are four categories (animated, documentary, children's and sports films) and various prizes (some monetary). Write: Tampere Film Festival, P.O. Box 305, SF-33101 Tampere 10, Finland.

The sixth **Ann Arbor 8mm Film Festival** is to be held February 13 through 15 (entry deadline January 27) and is open to all non-professional regular and super-8 films. There is a $3 entry fee and a minimum of $1000 in cash and prizes. Ann Arbor Film Cooperative, P.O. Box 8, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48107.

March 3 through 6 are the dates of the fourth **Birmingham International Educational Film Festival**, which is to include a workshop on the production, use and legal aspects of instructional media in education. Write the Festival, c/o Alabama Power Company, P.O. Box 2641, Birmingham, Alabama 35291, or call Craig Battles at 205-323-5341, ext. 3173.

Graduate and undergraduate students in the U.S. are invited to send their (15-mins. or less) super-8 or 16mm films or 1/2" or 3/4" videotapes, interpreting the preservation of American rural and urban history, to the third **National Collegiate Film and Video Competition** (deadline's August 1). There are $1000 prizes to be won in each of four categories. Further information from: Audiovisual Office, National Trust for Historic Preservation, 740-748 Jackson Place, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

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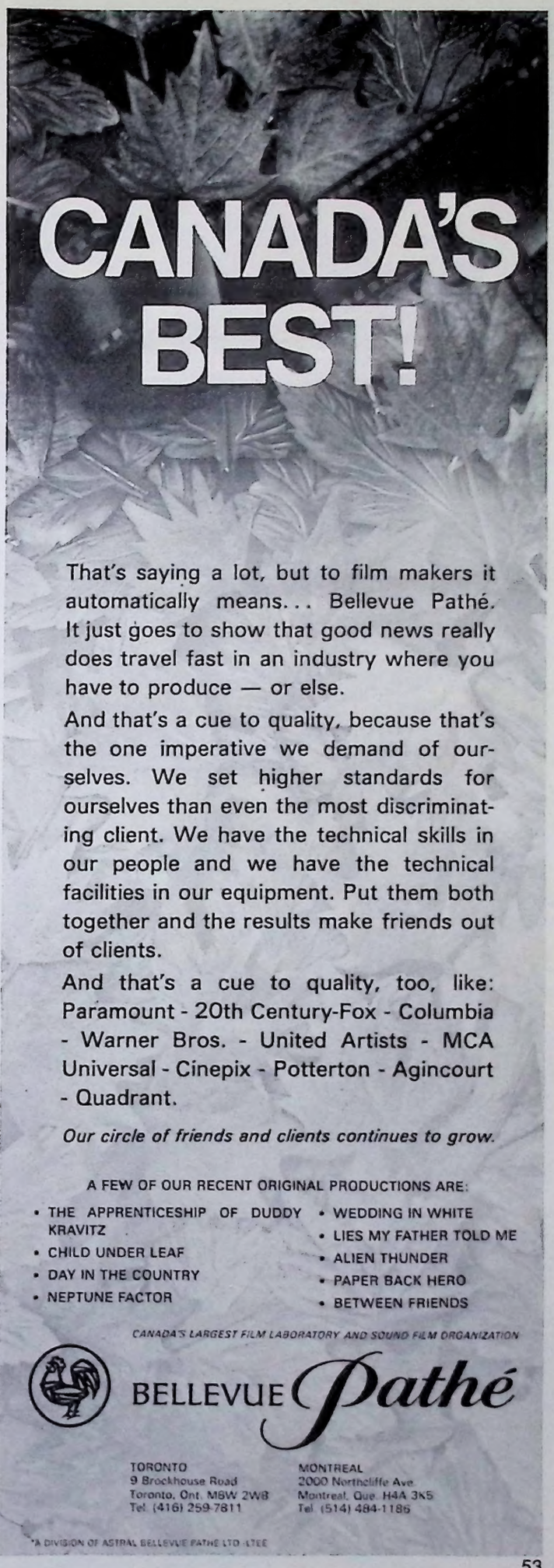
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